

8/5/12

Ignorance About Spiritual Gifts

1Cor. 12:1-11

Paul now turns to answer questions the Corinthians had made regarding spiritual gifts.

Remember that he opened up his letter acknowledging the grace God bestowed upon them by Christ Jesus, enriching them in everything, in all utterance and all knowledge, so that **they came short in no gift** eagerly waiting for the revelation of their Lord Jesus Christ. 1Cor. 1:4-5, 7

1. The gifts are till the Lord returns!
2. Gifts are not credentials for spirituality!
3. Divisions and party factions fractured the body at Corinth, as each chose their prominent teacher.

Paul now takes three chapters, about 20% of the letter, to deal with the problem of the gifts, which is clear evidence of the severity of the problem.

There was ignorance and confusion that brought about disorder in the assembly of the church through the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit.

This is a rough breakdown of these three chapters, regarding the gifts, so you can see the orderly progression of Paul's thoughtful council.

- I. The proclamation. 1Cor. 12:1-11

- II. The illustration. 1Cor. 12:12-26

- III. The application. 1Cor. 12:27-31

- IV. The motivation. 1Cor. 13:1-13

- V. The exhortation. 1Cor. 14:1-5

- IV. The instruction. 1Cor. 14:6-40

We want to concentrate on the proclamation of Paul regarding the gifts, which is described in three ways. 1Cor. 12:1-11

- I. The tragedy of the gifts. vs. 1-3

- II. The unity by diversity of the gifts. vs. 4-6

- III. The validity of the gifts. vs. 7-11

I. The tragedy of the gifts. vs. 1-3

A. Paul stated spiritual ignorance marked the Corinthians present condition. vs. 1

1. The apostle indicated he was responding to their questions about the gifts. vs. 1a
* "Now concerning spiritual *gifts*."

- a. The phrase appearing six times. 1Cor. 7:1, 25, 8:1, 4, 12:1, 16:1

- b. The word spiritual "pneumatikos", means that belonging to the Holy Spirit and one who is filled with and governed by the Spirit of God. vs. 1a

- 1) Any time you have an "ikos" ending it characterizes dominion or nature.

- 2) One who is dominated by the sinful flesh is "sarkikos". 1Cor. 3:1, 3, 4, 9:11, 10:3

- 3) One who is dominated by the Spirit of God is said to be “pneumatikos”.
1Cor. 3:1, 14:37, 15:44-45
- c. The root word is “pneuma found 41 times in 1Corinthians.
- 1) The context will determine whether it refers to wind, breath, the spirit of man or the Holy Spirit.
 - 2) The combination of the different forms of “pneuma”, “pneumatikos” is about 55 times in the letter.
 - 3) The Corinthians had a problem depending on the Holy Spirit of God from the opening chapter, leaning to human knowledge and wisdom rather than the power of the Spirit. 1Cor. 2:4
2. The apostle was very concerned about the Corinthians' ignorance about the gifts of the Spirit. vs. 1b-c
- * “brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant.”
- a. The address is tender and affectionate, “brethren”.
 - 1) They were “brethren” in the family of God and were to keep this in mind, 37 times in the letter.
 - 2) They were receiving instructions from their spiritual father.
 - b. The phrase, “I do not want you to be ignorant”, remember is one of Paul’s

favorite expressions for something important. Rom. 1:13, 11:25, 1Cor. 10:1, 2Cor. 1:8, 1Thess. 4:13

- 1) In literary expressions it is called “Litotes”, something expressed by negation of the contrary, such as not a few to express many, in this case, I want you to know.
 - 2) The word ignorant “agnoeo”, means, not to know or understand, he did not want them to remain ignorant, regarding the gifts of the Spirit. 1Cor. 10:1, 12:1, 14:38
- B.** Paul stated religious knowledge marked the Corinthian’s past condition. vs. 2
- * “You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.”
1. The majority of the Corinthian Church was made up of Gentiles. vs. 2a
 - a. They had come out of an idolatrous life-style, due to ignorance.
 - b. There were Jews also in the church.
 2. Though sincere, they were ignorantly led and carried away to dumb idols. vs. 2b
 - a. They had been carried away “apago”, led away to idols.
 - 1) The imperfect passive tense, marking repeated occurrences, in various ways and times.

- 2) The word is used for leading Jesus to the cross. Matt. 27:31
- 3) Paul told them behind idols worship were demons. 1Cor. 10:20
- b. The idols were dumb “aphonos”, voiceless, in contrast to the Holy Spirit whose voice they must heed.
- 3. There were many ways and manners they were drawn to the idols, “how ever you were led”. vs. 2c
 - a. Their past ignorance about God and the things of God was not to continue, as the rule for their lives in Christ.
 - 1) They were being led to believe something unscriptural about the Spirit of God, in relation to Jesus.
 - 2) The next verse will specify it.
 - b. They were to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit.
 - 1) They were new creatures.
 - 2) They had a new Master.
- C. Paul stated intellectual confusion marked the Corinthians condition. vs. 3
 - 1. The word therefore “dio” is a conclusion statement, on account of your idolatrous background, I want to remove your ignorance about the nature of the Spirit of God. vs. 3a

- * “Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed.”
- a. The apostle is correcting their wrong understanding about the witness of the Holy Spirit, regarding Jesus Christ.
 - 1) They were being led away to believe that one who possessed the Spirit of God and by the gifts, could call Jesus accursed. vs. 3a
 - 2) The word accursed “anathama” means that which is devoted to God for destruction, without the ability to be redeemed. Lev. 27:28, Josh. 6:17
 - * The word “say” is the indicative present active, indicating a real case, not hypothetical!
 - 3) Paul used it for himself to be damned for Israel. Rom. 9:8
 - 4) Paul used it for those who did not love the Lord Jesus Christ. 1Cor. 16:22
- b. The Corinthians were believing and teaching that a person by the Spirit of God could curse Jesus.
 - 1) They were doing this in contradiction to the Scriptures.
 - 2) They were accusing God of causing disorder and confusion within His own church.

2. The apostle was communicating the right understanding about the witness of the Holy Spirit, regarding Jesus. vs. 3b
 - * “and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.”
 - a. This does not refer to a mere intellectual and verbal statement, for anyone can do that, even unbelievers.
 - b. The statement refers to the genuine heart confession that comes by the conviction and illuminating work of the Holy Spirit of God, which God alone knows to be true.

Illustration

There is a very popular and excellent expositor, but when it comes to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, he attributes tongues to demons.

Application

1. Today there is still much ignorance about the gifts of the Spirit and they are exercised in a carnal, circus type atmosphere of confusion.
 - * “For God is not *the author* of **confusion** but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.” 1Cor. 14:33
2. Today in the church, due to the lack of Bible teaching many people mix and integrate their past religious believes with Christianity, called syncretism, plus Emerging Church teacher

- teach contemplating prayer and labyrinth, giving a bad witness of Christ.
- * “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves **teachers**; and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.” 2Tim. 4:3-4
3. Today the same old rumor is still floating around that people curse Jesus by the vocal gifts of the Spirit and presented as grounds to prove that the gifts are no longer for today.
 - * Being, “**children, tossed** to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.” Eph. 4:14

The tragedy of the gifts is the ignorance that contradicts the word of God!

II. The unity by diversity of the gifts. vs. 4-6

- A. Paul stated there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. vs. 4
 1. The word gifts “charisma” according to Thayer’s Greek Lexicon means grace or gifts denoting extraordinary powers, distinguishing certain Christians and enabling them to serve the church of Christ, the reception of which is due to

the power of divine grace operating on their souls by the Holy Spirit.

- a. The word appears five times in this chapter. vs. 4, 9, 28, 30, 31
- b. The word appears only two other times in the letter.
 - 1) To the gifts of the Spirit. 1Cor. 1:7
 - 2) To the gift of celibacy. 1Cor. 7:7
2. The gifts are diverse from one another.
 - a. The word diversities “diairesis” means in particular, a distinction arising from a difference in kind distributed to different persons.
 - b. The word appears in this plural form three times in the New Testament in these three verses. vs. 4, 5, 6
 - c. The word is in the plural, many.
 - * Gifts differ according to the grace given. Rom. 12:6
3. The gifts though diverse in kind have the common source by the same Spirit.
 - a. The word “Spirit” is referring to the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, often referred to in the personal pronoun “He”.
 - b. The Holy Spirit the other Comforter, just like Jesus, to do the work of Jesus and speaks only of Jesus and never glorifies Himself. Jn. 16:13-14

- c. The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Grace for the Age of Grace. Heb. 10:29
 - f. The Holy Spirit knows the things of God. 1Cor. 2:12
- B.** Paul stated there are different ministries, but the same Lord. vs. 5
1. The word ministries “diakonia”, means to service or the act of serving, the function and ministration of those who render to others the offices of Christian affection.
 - a. The word is used of Martha cumbered about with much serving, as Mary sat at the feet of Jesus. Lk. 10:40
 - b. The word is used for the word of the ministry or church body. Eph. 4:11
 - c. The word in a different form is used for deacons, which basically identifies one who runs errands or a waiter on tables, emphasizing servants attitude.
 2. There are many distinct and different ways and kinds of serving ministries to serve the body.
 - a. The word diversity “diairesis”, as in verse four, is a distinctiveness of another, yet of the same category.
 - b. This implies design for a specific purpose or goal.

- c. The diversity implies a different approach.
 - d. The diversity implies the goal of efficiency.
3. The different ministries of service, though diverse in the kind of service rendered, but the same have Lord.
- a. The word for Lord “Kurios” means he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; master, lord.
 - b. The word was the title of the Roman emperor, as a God.
 - c. The title is used for God, the Messiah, the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- C. Paul stated there are diversities of activities, but the same God. vs. 6
1. The word activities “energema”, means the thing wrought, effect or operation.
 - a. The idea and emphasis is the effect through the energy and power to bring about the result by the Supper-natural enablement of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. This form of the word is used only two times in the New Testament, the other is in verse 10, “working”.
 2. There are many distinct and different ways the Supper-natural power of God works in the church body.

- a. The word diversity “diairesis”, as in verse four and five, a distinctiveness of another, yet of the same category.
 - b. The activities of God to bring affective results are innumerable.
3. The distinct and different activities of effect and results are many, but it is the same God who work all in all.
- a. The reference to God is the Father.
 - b. The Father is in harmony and in union with the same Spirit and same Lord.
 - c. The Trinity of God can not be missed.
 - 1) Three distinct persons, yet one God.
 - 2) Three distinct persons, yet all God.
 - 3) Three distinct persons, yet diverse in the part in the salvation of man, the service rendered and the activity of effects and results.
4. The very teaching of unity is magnified through diversity operated by the three persons of the Trinity, acting as One through the different gifts, ministries and activities in the church.
- a. They are different in person.
 - b. They are different in position.
 - c. They are different in personal involvement.
 - d. The word “but” is repeated three times marking the unity despite the diversity.

Illustration

If is born without legs, arms, sight or the ability to hear, they will be greatly handicapped in life, so the church without the different gift of the Spirit.

Application

1. All the gifts are to be functioning on a regular basis, as the church gathers together, as evident of the diversity that magnifies unity!

- a. There are twenty-one gifts listed in the New Testament. Rom. 12:6-8, 28, 1Cor. 12:8-10, Eph. 4:11
- b. The gifts are much needed in the body of Christ, let me mention some rarely sough after, the gifts of exhortation, helps, leading, mercy, and giving, just to mention a few.
- c. The gifts are all operated by the Holy Spirit of God in unisons and harmony to bring about the most efficient end for the glory of God.

* “As each one has received a **gift**, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” 1Pet. 4:10

2. The various ministries and the various manner and forms they are carried out in the church are astounding, as the Lord Jesus raises people up!

- a. Evangelism can take place by musical concerts, crusades, street witnessing, door to door, one on one or even in sports outreaches or internet evangelism.

- b. Teaching can take place from the pulpit, the small Bible study, new believer studies or one on one discipleship or skypping.
- c. The ministry of helps can take place by answering phones, helping people move, give a ride to church or baby-sit children one night to give the couple a break.

* “As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now **separate** to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Acts 13:2

3. The various active effect and result of God’s power in the church and in people’s lives, cannot be attributed to man or coincidence, but to the mighty work of God!

- a. The various degrees of power God manifests to turn people from various lives of sin has a common denominator, sufficient and efficient!
- b. The degree of God’s power to enable a person to turn from their good moral self-righteousness living, to see their depravity.
- c. The degree of power to set a person free from a life of drugs is no different from a “good moral pagan”, but sufficient.
- d. The degree of power to turn a person from alcohol will differ from person to person, but sufficient.

- e. The degree of God's power to turn a person from a life of sexual promiscuity will differ, but will be sufficient.
 - * "So when Peter saw *it*, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?" "And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." Acts 3:12, 16

The unity by diversity of the gifts is the work of God!

III. The validity of the gifts. vs. 7-11

- A. Paul stated the principle of diversity is for the edification of the church. vs. 7
 - * "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all*:
 - 1. The focus should not be the gift, but the Spirit, as He operates the gift through the person.
 - a. The manifestation of the Holy Spirit takes place through different gifts, different types of ministries and in

- different activities of power bringing about various results.
 - b. But the presence of the Holy Spirit is the focus, not the person or gift, as He is the One continuing the ministry of Jesus, in and through the community of God's redeemed.
- 2. The manifestation of the Spirit is imparted to every believer.
 - a. The individual's body is called the temple of the Holy Spirit. 1Cor. 6:19
 - b. The corporate body is also called the temple of God, collectively. 1Cor. 3:16-17
 - c. The Christian community is the community of the Holy Spirit.
 - * The word "given" is key, the gifts are not deserved, but given as a gift like salvation! vs. 7, 8
- 3. The manifestation of the Spirit given to each person to profit the entire church.
 - a. Every gift, ministry and activity of the Spirit are not for the individual person primarily, but others.
 - 1) The word profit "sunphero" means to contribute in order to help.
 - 2) A key word. 1Cor. 6:12, 7:35, 10:23, 33, 12:7
 - b. The one exception is tongues, it edifies the individual person, as they

pray in the Spirit, though they don't understand what they are saying.

- c. But if the tongue is interpreted, either by another or the one speaking, then they serve as prophesy for edification. 1Cor. 14:2, 4, 6, 13-17

B. Paul stated the needed diversity by naming nine gifts of the Spirit. vs. 8-10

- * The nine listed, fall under these three categories, but are not listed in category groups and many of the gifts are manifested in combination and multi-combination, as the gifts of revelation, power and inspiration.
 1. To one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit. vs. 8a
 - a. This is one of the gifts of revelation.
 - * The word "given" is key, the gifts are not deserved, but given as a gift like salvation!
 - b. It is a supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit of divine purposes concerning people, things or events of present or future.
 - * Jesus revealed it when He was asked, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar?" Matt. 22:15-22
 2. To another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit. vs. 8b
 - a. This is a second gift of revelation.

- b. It is a supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit, given to an individual of facts, information or details with the impossibility of obtaining it by natural means, regarding the past or present.
- c. A word of knowledge is not mind reading, feelings or hunches!
 - 1) Peter's confession at Philippi. Matt. 16:16-17
 - 2) The command to go get the coin from the fish's mouth to pay taxes. Matt. 17:27
- 3. To another the gift of faith by the same Spirit. vs. 9a
 - a. This is the first gift of power.
 - b. It is a supernatural power of belief to an individual to receive what the holy Spirit has revealed, active faith that positively expects a miracle, not necessarily immediate. Harold Horton
 - c. The gift could be manifested immediately or in time.
 - 1) The gift is distinct from miracles and healings.
 - 2) The gift is distinct from saving faith. Eph. 2:8, Rom. 10:17
 - 3) The gift is distinct from faith, the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit, love. Gal. 5:22, 2Thess. 1:3
- 4. To another the gifts of healings by the same Spirit. vs. 9b

- a. This is the second gift of power.
- b. It is a supernatural acts or events of power that would make an individual whole, healthy or healed without natural means, whatever the disorder may be and notice it **is plural, gifts**.
- c. All four gifts are the work of the Holy Spirit, 3 times, “the same Spirit”! vs. 8-9
 - 1) The healing of the man who was brought to Jesus and let down through the roof. Mk. 2:5
* The faith was of his friends but Jesus healed him.
 - 2) The healing of the woman with the issue of blood. Lk. 8:48
* Her faith made her whole.
 - 3) The healing of the man at the gate beautiful. Acts 3
* The faith was of neither Peter or the man, but God’s sovereignty!
 - 4) Epaphratitus and Timothy were not healed, but not for their lack of faith.
- 5. To another the gift of working of miracles. vs. 10a, 28e
 - a. This is the third gift of power.
 - b. It is a supernatural acts or events of power which would defy, or go against our natural laws of the

- universe, physical, biological, scientific etc.
- 1) The healing of the gate called Beautiful was a miracle through a word of knowledge and a word of wisdom, manifested in a miracle.
 - 2) The miracle that occurred through Paul’s sweat bands and those of the apostles were done by God through them. Acts 19:11-12, Heb. 2:4
 - 6. To another the gift of prophecy. vs. 10b
* Rom. 12:6, 14:3
 - a. This is the first gift of inspiration.
 - b. It is a supernatural utterance proclaimed to man through man by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for edification, exhortation or comfort of which preaching is very much prophecy. 1Cor. 14:3
 - c. The gift has a two-fold manifestation.
 - 1) To forthtell the word of God ,as the instrument to communicate His mind or reveal truth, such as preaching and teaching.
 - a) This is the primary function of prophecy in the Old Testament.
 - b) Mary prophesied in edification, exhortation and comfort. Lk. 1:46-55

- c) Prophecy has to be judged by scripture and the direction it is delivered and it's three-fold function of edification, exhortation and comfort.
- d) Prophecy and the interpretation of tongues are confused often.
- 2) The foretelling of God's predictive revelation of the future.
 - * This is the secondary function of prophecy in the Old Testament as well as the New testament.
 - a) The Holy Spirit spoke through the teachers at Antioch to separate Saul and Barnabas, touching exhortation and future events. Acts 13:1-3
 - b) The daughters' of Philip prophesied and the prophet Agabus predicted Paul's binding at Jerusalem. Acts 21:9-11
- 7. To another the discerning of spirits. vs. 10c
 - a. This is the third gift of power.
 - b. This is a supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit, about Satanic spirits.
 - c. This is not natural discernment, but discernment of spirits, plural! 1Jn. 4:1
 - d. The gift is abused and misused by calling it "spirit of discernment", there is no such gift listed.

- e. The gift is not feelings, but discerning "diakrisis", a distinguishing with certainty of it's Satanic origin, as with Elymas the sorcerer and proclaiming blindness. Acts 13:6-10
 - * The gift of miracles and faith was also present.
- f. The gift is not your suspicions, but absolute certainty, as the girl who had the spirit of divination at Philippi. Acts. 16:16-18
- g. The demonic spirits will be prevalent for false teaching in the Last days. 1Tim. 4:1
- 8. To another the gift of tongues. vs. 10d, 28
 - a. This is the second gift of inspiration.
 - b. It is a supernatural utterance proclaimed by man by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in an unknown language. The Spirit making intercession according to the will of God, while at the same time your understanding is unfruitful. 1Cor. 14:2, 4, 13-17
 - b. The gift is in the plural, for personal devotion, unless interpreted.
 - c. The gift is to be used in my own private prayer life or in an orderly manner in smaller gatherings.

- d. The gift was never used to preach or teach, as some attempt to teach, particularly at Pentecost for they all heard them speak in their own dialects. Acts 2
- e. The concept that the Spirit forces people to speak in tongues uncontrollably is not scriptural, for the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets. 1Cor. 14:32
- f. The gift of tongues does not allow a person to curse Jesus. 1Cor. 12:3
- g. The use of tongues and instructions are laid out. 1Cor. 14:18-25
- 9. To another the gift of interpretation. vs. 10e, 1Cor. 14:5
 - a. This is the third gift of inspiration.
 - b. It is a supernatural interpretation of utterance by man, inspired by the Holy Spirit through the individual.
 - b. The gift is not a translation. 1Cor. 14:5-11, 28
 - c. The interpretation is not the mind of the individual, but of God. 1Cor. 14:26-33, 37-40
 - 1) The Scriptures are the standard.
 - 2) The direction must be up to God.
 - * Harold Horton, The Gifts Of The Spirit.

- C. Paul stated the efficiency of diversity due to the Holy Spirit of God. vs. 11
 - 1. The Holy Spirit works all these gifts.
 - * “But one and the same Spirit works all these things.” vs. 11a
 - a. Despite the difference kinds of gifts.
 - b. Despite the different manner of ministries of service.
 - c. Despite the different degrees of Divine power.
 - d. These are all done by the Holy Spirit!
 - * This is the fourth time this is repeated, “the same Spirit”. vs. 4, 8, 9, 11
 - 2. The Holy Spirit distributes to each, to every person. vs. 11b
 - * “Distributing to each one individually as He wills.”
 - a. The Holy Spirit of God knows where a person will serve best with the proper gift for the body.
 - b. The Holy Spirit of God knows what will be best for us and the body.
 - c. The Holy Spirit never imparts all the gift to any one person.
 - d. The Holy Spirit of God is sovereign, executing the ongoing work of Jesus, who is the head of the church.

Illustration

The illustration of the body that follows this section speaks for itself, how the body with it's many members is so efficient. 1Cor. 12:12-26

Application

1. Each of us should be exercising our gift or gifts for the edification of the body of Christ.
 - a. The question is who is getting the glory?
 - b. The operation of the gift is recognized by God, only if it is done in agape love. 1Cor. 4:5. 1Cor. 13
2. Each of us should understand that all the gifts are distributed and operated by God as He wills and when He wills, you and I can not turn them on and off when we want to?
 - a. The only gift you and I can turn on and off any time is the gift of tongues.
 - b. Everyone has at least one gift. 1Pet. 4:10-11
3. Each of us need to be willing to trust the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to chose and distribute the gifts as He will.
 - a. Or end up being carnal and as an ear are always telling every part of the body how they are to do their job?
 - b. Edify the body through your gift or gifts and let the others edify you also, enjoy the ministry of the Holy Spirit, His yoke is easy and His burden is light!

The validity of the gifts is their benefit to the people of God!

Conclusion

This is the proclamation of Paul regarding the gifts, which are described in three ways:

- I. The tragedy of the gifts is the ignorance that contradicts the word of God!
- II. The unity by diversity of the gifts is the work of God!
- III. The validity of the gifts is their benefit to the people of God!