

1 CORINTHIANS SERIES – 55

I Corinthians 12:7

INTRODUCTION & REVIEW

Now we have been looking at Spiritual Gifts in 1 Cor. 12. Today we will find ourselves in 1 Cor. 12:7...

THE **PROBLEM** OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS - I CORINTHIANS 12:1-11

- The **DISCUSSION** focuses on work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer -1-3
- The **DIFFERENCES** among the believers are caused by God - 4-6

The **DESIGN** Of The Gifts Relates To Others, Not Yourself – 7

Now we all understand if we've been a Christian for any time, that the subject of spiritual gifts is controversial and can be confusing.

Churches disagree on what they are? How many there are?

And also how they are to be manifested?

It seems everyone that has an opinion is usually very dogmatic on this issue.

This is not an easy subject.

This is not an easy subject and we began by looking at the discussion of the opening three versus which shows us the work of the Holy Spirit.

That no man can say Jesus is Lord apart from the work of the Holy Spirit.

Then in verses 4 to 6 we noticed the differences in the gifts.

Each person of the triune God is mentioned the spirit in verse 4, our Lord Jesus in verse 5, and God the father in verse 6.

Those differences are very prominent.

There's a difference in the number of gifts but the Holy Spirit gives them all.

There is a difference in the way they're used. The way we serve the Lord.

And there are differences as to their affect, as to what they accomplish.

Not all of us have the same results.

We are all held accountable for being faithful for everything that God is given us.

It is required that a steward be found faithful, 1 Cor 4:1-2.

So let's pick it up now verse 7. If you are following along we're talking about the problem of spiritual gifts in the opening 11 verses and we are at point 3, The

DESIGN OF THE GIFTS – vv. 7-11.

READ TEXT: 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

PRAY

Now according to verse 7 The **DESIGN** of the gifts relates to others, not yourself - 7

THE **PRODUCING** OF THE GIFTS IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“the manifestation of the Spirit is given...”

Greek: *phanerosis*

Manifestation (*phanerōsis*) – used twice – other forms of the word used 93 times in NT - has the basic idea of making known, clear, or evident.

That is what spiritual gifts do: they make the Holy Spirit known, clear, and evident in the church and in the world.

They manifest the Spirit. The meaning is the opposite of hidden or private.

When we talk about the design of the gifts what is God's purpose behind it?

Please understand that the whole argument of self edification is not really taught in the Bible. Spiritual gifts are never given to be hidden or to be used privately.

They are given to manifest the Holy Spirit, to put Him on display.

A lot of people believe that. That God gives him a gift to bless themselves.

That isn't taught in the Bible at all.

God gives you a gift to bless other people, to build up other people.

It is not for self edification.

The Bible says in Romans 15:1-2 that we are not to please ourselves, but what to edify one another and build one another up in the body of Christ.

We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves.² Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

He says the manifestation of the spirit.

He didn't say the manifestation of the gifts.

He said the manifestation of the spirit.

Manifestation means to display, to put into operation, to show forth exactly what were talking about. Namely the gifts.

According to the Bible what the gifts are is the person of the Holy Spirit working in your life and mine. That's what the gifts are.

We saw in a previous message, we saw what they are not.

It's very dangerous to think this is human ability.

It's not just taking your talents that are natural or your abilities or your educational background and kind of shaping it up a little bit.

That is the point of spiritual gifts.

They aren't based on education, they aren't based on natural talents.

God can certainly use all of that for His glory.

But we need understand that it is the work of the Holy Spirit very definitely.

Now having said that, I need to talk to a little bit about the work of the Holy Spirit.

Let's pause here for a gigantic parenthesis right now.

I want to be clear on our teaching here. I would like us to spend some time looking at 12 things that are involved in the work of the Holy Spirit.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT INVOLVES THE FOLLOWING 12 THINGS:

(1) **CONVICTION** of sin, righteousness, & judgment (Conviction)

You say "why did you come to believe in Christ?"

I was interested I went to this service, or I heard this message and I drew the conclusions and I made my decision.

But actually the Bible says the reason why all that is happening is because the Holy Spirit of God and the timing of the Lord is working on your heart.

The conviction of sin as well as righteousness and judgment, putting it all together that you don't have to face these.

So the Holy Spirit of God is the one that brings that conviction in our hearts that we need to do something, that we need to settle this.

John 16:7-11 ⁶*But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.* ⁷*Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.* ⁸*And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment:* ⁹*concerning sin, because they do not believe in me;* ¹⁰*concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer;* ¹¹*concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

(2) **CONVERSION** – (Regeneration)

Regeneration simply needs to be born again. It's a spiritual birth.

Oh it has similarities to the physical birth, the getting of new life.

But there also major differences.

So we have conviction first and that we have conversion.

Jesus said that if a man is not born of the spirit he can't enter the kingdom of heaven.

John 3:1-8 – *Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.* ²*This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.”* ³*Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* ⁴*Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man*

be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Paul said in **Romans 8:9** - *You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.*

Titus 3:5-7 – ³ *For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. ⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

I Peter 1:2, 22-25 - *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.*

You get a DNA change. According to the Bible you become a partaker of the Divine nature and something happens inside of you, a quiet peace. Born Again.

And one day that new nature will come forth in all its glory.

We are like a caterpillar right now...in this shell of a body...but one day through the work of the Holy Spirit we will fly away and be made into like the Lord Himself.

1 John 3:2 - *² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.*

(3) CONVINCING of our present relationship to Jesus Christ (Assurance)

Many people doubt their relationship to God.

The Bible actually tells us in Romans 8 that the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit, the inward man. What we are inside.

He convinces us that we belong to God or we don't.

Rom. 8:14-17 - *¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.*

1 John 5:6-13 *This is he who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷ For there are three that testify: ⁸ the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. ⁹ If we receive the testimony of men, the*

testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son. 10 Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. 11 And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

To the believing heart, if you really been born again, as you study the Bible and look at what it says about Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Who is the true author of this book, He guided all the writers as to what they wrote was truly what God intended, the Holy Spirit of God takes what is in this book and brings assurance to your heart.

If you're not a believer you read it and say its a bunch of nonsense.

But if you're believing all of a sudden the Holy Spirit is convincing you of your relationship to Christ.

We also know the book of first John chapter 5:6-13 The Holy Spirit bears witness to the truth about Jesus Christ.

I John 3:24 - *24 Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.*

(4) **CONFIDENCE** in our future blessings in Jesus Christ (Sealing)

II Cor. 1:20-22 – *²⁰For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. ²¹And it is God who*

establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, ²² and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Ephesians 1 speaks about being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise

He is the earnest of our inheritance.

Eph.1:13-14 - ¹³ *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

Guarantee – *arrabon* – referring to engagement ring.

The Holy Spirit is like the engagement ring and the wedding is coming when Jesus Christ returns.

(5) **CONNECTION** to the body of Jesus Christ (Baptism)

I Cor. 12:13 - ¹³ *For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*

The unity of the Body of Christ. Nobody is better than anyone else.

We all stand on equal ground before the Lord.

And our connection to the Body of Christ is very very important.

That makes us all one.

We're not all one folks because we all have the same likes and dislikes.

We are not all the same...some like watching comedies, some like watching dramas, some like watching reality shows. Some eat steak, some eat chicken, some eat only vegetables, and some of us, well we eat anything.

The purpose of the church is not to make us all like carbon copies of each other.

We agree to disagree. What makes us one is the life of the Holy Spirit within us.

Very important to understand that or you will end up pressuring everyone to be just like you.

(6) **CHRISTLIKENESS** in all we think, say, and do (*Transformation*) *metamorphosis*
Rom. 12:1-2 – *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

II Cor. 3:18 - ¹⁸ *And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

Whats happening here is that through the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life, He is continually transforming you so you act and react more like Jesus Christ.

When we sin, or blow it, its because we are not following the lead of the Holy Spirit in our lives, but we are following our own fleshy desires.

But the Holy Spirit wants to work in us, even in the tough times and difficult situations, to act like the Lord Jesus Christ would.

There are no doubt people here with us today, that before they came to Christ, before God worked in their heart, to cause them to repent and turn to Christ alone for salvation, before they were born again, you would not have wanted to meet them, especially in a dark ally. You probably would avoid them on the street.

You would turn the other way. You wouldn't trust them.

But they came to know the Lord and now you can see the Lord working in and through them. His love, compassion, grace and mercy is evident in their lives.

Why? It's the work of the Holy Spirit. Don't praise them...The Holy Spirit is doing His job of transforming us, causing us to be more and more Christ-like.

(7) **CONTROL** of our sinful desires (Fruit)

Gal. 5:16-26 – ¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

The Holy Spirit produces fruit in you that controls your sinful desires.

Eph. 5:3-14 - 3 But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. 4 Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. 5 For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not become partners with them; 8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. 13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, 14 for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

(8) **CHANGE** in our attitudes (Filling)

Eph. 5:15-21 - ¹⁵ Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving

thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

(9) **COMFORT** in our trials (Intercession)

John 14:16-18 - ¹⁶ *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,* ¹⁷ *even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.* ¹⁸ *“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.*

Rom. 8:26-30 - ²⁶ *Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ *And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ *And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*****

(10) **CALLING** to do the Lord’s will (Guidance)

Acts 16:6-10 - ⁶ *And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. ⁷ *And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. ⁸ *So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. ⁹ *And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging****

him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰ And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Acts 21:10-14 - ¹⁰ While we were staying for many days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. ¹¹ And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.' " ¹² When we heard this, we and the people there urged him not to go up to Jerusalem. ¹³ Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." ¹⁴ And since he would not be persuaded, we ceased and said, "Let the will of the Lord be done."

Acts 23:11 - ¹¹ The following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome."

The gifted leaders of the church are all called by the Holy Spirit.

Have you ever met someone who maybe you thought wasn't called? You can tell.

The early leaders of the church were sent out by the Holy Spirit.

(11) **CONCERN** about the lost – (Power)

Acts 1:8 - ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

1 Cor. 2:2-5 - ² For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³ And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, ⁴ and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Talking about the freedom to express your faith to others without embarrassment.

Romans 1:16 - *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

The Holy Spirit empowers us with a burden or concern for the lost.

The opposite of that is true as well. If we are believers who are not living lives which are honoring to the Lord, we get so caught up in our own issues, the last thing we think about is having a burden for the lost. Don't care if anybody comes to Christ.

(12) **COMMITMENT** of different ministries for the encouragement of believers (Gifts)

1 Cor. 12:11 - ¹¹ All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

If you were to read a systematic theology book on the Holy Spirit, you would no doubt come across these words.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT INVOLVES 12 THINGS:

1. **CONVICTION** of sin, righteousness, & judgment (**Conviction**)
2. **CONVERSION** – (**Regeneration**)
3. **CONVINCING** of our present relationship to Jesus Christ (**Assurance**)
4. **CONFIDENCE** in our future blessings in Jesus Christ(**Sealing**)
5. **CONNECTION** to the body of Jesus Christ(**Baptism**)

6. **CHRISTLIKENESS** in all we think, say, and do(*Transformation*)

7. **CONTROL** of our sinful desires (**Fruit**)

8. **CHANGE** in our attitudes (**Filling**)

9. **COMFORT** in our trials(**Intercession**)

10. **CALLING** to do the Lord's will(**Guidance**)

11. **CONCERN** about the lost(**Power**)

12. **COMMITMENT** of different ministries to encourage believers

So what we are doing is setting up verse 7 so we can understand what Paul is telling us.

Remember what we are talking about here...The **DESIGN** of the gifts relates to others, not yourself - 7

THE PRODUCING OF THE GIFTS IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The way some Christians talk is they go and do whatever they think they should, then they turn to God and ask Him to bless their actions or ministry.

No...that's backwards.

The whole matter of a spiritual gift being exercised in your life is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

That's why He's in your life, He wants to use you to be a blessing to others within the Body of Christ for His glory.

And by the way, He really doesn't need your help. He is God, correct?

A lot of us try to help the Holy Spirit out...part of the problem is just staying out of His way and allowing Him to work in and through you for the betterment of other in the Body of Christ and for His glory.

So Let's come back to this point **THE PRODUCING OF THE GIFTS IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

THE PLACE OF EVERY BELIEVER

“to every man” – I Peter 4:10 - ¹⁰ As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:

THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFTS

*“for the common good” – Greek: **pros to sumpheron***

“toward the bearing together” (to bring unity and harmony in the body of Jesus Christ)

They are also given **for the common good** (*sumpheron*, from a verb meaning literally “to bring together”).

The term also came to mean “to help, confer a benefit, or be advantageous,” and in the context of this verse means “mutually beneficial or advantageous.”

Spiritual gifts are to be edifying and helpful to the church, to God's people whom He brings together in His name.

Not only does the exercise of our spiritual gifts minister to others but it also helps them to better use their own gifts.

A pastor, for example, who faithfully preaches and teaches his congregation not only builds them up spiritually but prepares them to be better stewards of their own gifts.

God uses him *“for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ”* (Eph. 4:12).

The Christian who ministers his gift of helps not only serves other believers but encourages them to be more helpful.

The believer who exercises his gift of mercy helps his fellow believers to be more merciful.

As we each minister our own gifts we help others to better minister theirs.

On the other hand, as we fail to minister our own gifts we hinder others in ministering theirs.

A Christian who does not exercise his spiritual gifts cripples his own ministry and the ministry of others—to say nothing of forfeiting the blessing and reward that would have come to his own life.

When I watch professional sports, I marvel at how a human body can function with such amazing coordination, endurance, and efficiency.

Every muscle, every organ, every blood vessel, every nerve, every cell is harnessed in a completely unified effort to win.

How wonderful it would be if we who comprise Christ's body, the church, would function with such efficiency and harmony!

How wonderful if every part of His body would work together in total unity and interdependence.

What an impact the church would have on the world if every believer would be as wholly responsive to the mind of Jesus Christ as the bodies of dedicated athletes are responsive to the minds of their owners.

When the church ministers its gifts as it should, at least **four important blessings result.**

First, Christians themselves receive great blessing—both from exercising their own gifts and from the exercising of other's gifts for their benefit.

God never intended for the ministry of His church to be carried on by a few professional or specially talented men, while everyone else sits back and watches.

Second, when everyone does his part in ministry the church forms a dynamic witness, with power and effectiveness it cannot otherwise have.

Not only are those with the gift of evangelism empowered to witness more effectively but every believer is used directly or indirectly in strengthening the testimony of the gospel before unbelievers. So all share in the results.

When Peter preached at Pentecost three thousand people were saved (Acts 2:41). And when the Jerusalem church, including many of those new converts, began to faithfully and sacrificially exercise their various gifts, *“the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved”* (v. 47).

Third, when the church ministers its gifts, God’s leaders become apparent.

In a faithfully functioning church, spiritual leadership inevitably emerges.

Capable leadership is essential for the church to operate as it should, but a faithful church is also necessary to provide the environment in which leaders can develop and lead as they should.

God’s leaders are not made by attending leadership seminars built on worldly techniques for creating success.

God equips His leaders when they are saved, and when they come to have the spiritual and moral qualifications that come from obedience to His Word, their leadership blossoms and becomes evident.

Spirit-filled leadership appears rapidly when God is freely at work in His body.

Fourth, a church that faithfully uses its gifts in the Spirit's power experiences the joy of great unity, love, and fellowship—in ways that no amount of human ability, planning, or effort can produce.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE GIFTS REVEALS THAT WE ALL HAVE DIFFERENT MINISTRIES - 8-10

1C. It is a **Sampling** of the gifts – only nine are listed

1D. Seven in ***Romans 12:6-8***

2D. Nine in ***I Cor. 12:8-10*** (prophecy is repeated from ***Rom. 12:6***)

3D. Eight in ***I Cor. 12:28*** (three were repeated from ***I Cor. 12:8-10***)

4D. Four in ***Eph. 4:11*** (three repeated from ***I Cor. 12:28***)

5D. Perhaps one from ***I Peter 4:9-10***

NOTE: The gifts can be put into the following categories for easy remembrance:

(1) **SPECIAL** GIFTS – ***to equip God's people***

Apostles Evangelists
Prophets Pastor/Teachers

(2) **SPEAKING** GIFTS – ***to explain God's truth***

Prophecy
Teaching Exhortation
Word of wisdom
Word of knowledge

(3) **SERVING** GIFTS – ***to enable God's work***

Leadership
Administration
Ministering Showing

Mercy Faith
Discernment

(4) **SUPPORT** GIFTS – *to enable God’s people*

Helps
Giving
Hospitality

(5) **SIGN** GIFTS – *to establish God’s authority*

Working of miracles Gifts of
healing Kinds of tongues
Interpretation of tongues

2C. It is the **Same** Spirit Who gives the gifts - 8

“to one is given by the Spirit...by the same spirit (also v. 9)”

3C. Some are **Similar** to other gifts:

The “word of wisdom” is similar (Greek: ***allos*** – another of the same kind) to the “word of knowledge” The “kinds of tongues” are similar to the “interpretation of tongues” (***allos***)

4C. Some are **Supernatural** in terms of what they accomplish:

“working of miracles” and “gifts of healing” and “kinds of tongues” etc.

5B. The **DISTRIBUTION** of the gifts rests upon the sovereignty of God - 11

1C. The Holy Spirit **Works** the gifts through the believers

“all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit”

2C. The Holy Spirit **Wills** the distribution of the gifts

“dividing to every man severally as He will”

The Greek word is our opponents referring to the engagement ring when you become a believer it's like the presence of the Holy Spirit is the engagement ring and the wedding is coming when Jesus Christ returns number five connection to the body of Christ very soon now in our study were getting hit first Corinthians 12:13 you might glance at it right now the Bible says by one Spirit are we all baptize into one body whether we be Jews or Gentiles whether bond or free and have all been made to drink into one Spirit the unity of the body of Christ one person is in better than another one everybody stands on equal ground before our Lord and our connection to the body of Christ by this baptism of the Holy Spirit is very very important that makes us all why we are not one folks because we have the same likes and dislikes I I like to tell people the only spirit filled thing on television is Monday night football amen but maybe you like Martha Stewart or the home shopping channel I don't know what is your deal but I'm telling you we are not all the same the purpose of the church is not to make us all like carbon copies of each other we agree to disagree and still love each other what makes this one is the life of the Holy Spirit within this is very important understand that are you a pressure everybody to be like you is very important about the six thing I love the work of the Holy Spirit is Christ likeness Christ likeness in all we think say and do this is called the transformation of the spirit requires metamorphosis what's actually happening here is mentioned in Romans 12:1-2 into adding second Corinthians 3:18 what's happening here is through the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life he is continually transforming you so that you are

and react more like Jesus Christ when we blow it it's usually because we clenched and grieve the Holy Spirit but a Holy Spirit was to work in us and make us even to the tough times in the difficult situations and make us so that we react like the Lord Jesus what I've seen this a lot of people are people here in his audience that I know who frankly you would want of met them before they became Christians especially in a dark alley we got a lot of weird people here you know that there's some wacko folks I would not trust by what you but you know what they come to know the Lord and I want to see enormous beautiful chain weather becomes lobbying and generous and outgoing and sweet and trying all they had their moments we all do but the work that's going on there is the work of the Holy Spirit that sometimes we may be praise them too much and forget it's the Holy Spirit is doing his job of transforming us to be Christlike number seven very important is the control of our sinful desires would speak about this as the fruit of the Holy Spirit it's in Galatians 5:16 to 26 which were told we walk in the spirit we won't carry out the lust of the flesh and he goes on to describe the works of the flesh all these sinful desires we have but the fruit of the Holy Spirit's love and joy and peace so the Holy Spirit produces fruit in you that controls your sinful desires number eight only call a change in attitude that's a result of what we call the filling of the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 5 verses 15 to 21 it talks about how when you're filled or controlled with the spirit there's an attitude change in fact you'll be giving thanks for all things even things that are tough and painful because you'll see how God uses it for his glory one of the evidence is that you're filled with the Holy Spirit is when you submit to

other people instead of what your own way all the time being stubborn self all this is the Holy Spirit working in its number nine is comfort in our trials often called the intercession of the spirit mentioned in Romans 8:26 the 30 John 14 Jesus even said that when the spirit comes to be another comforter Holy Spirit will comfort you when it looks like all hell is breaking out around you and when there's trials so serious it does look like as any answers sometimes I can be on a life-threatening disease sometimes I can be just in facing death itself is a lot of fearful things in life but God is a God of all comfort in how he does this is through the Holy Spirit actually we don't know what we should pray for as we ought says Romans eight but the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us according to the will of God that's a beautiful thing about his ministry number can is what I call Colleen to do the Lord's will sometimes called in the theologies a college guidance of the Holy Spirit bots of examples in the book of acts Francis in chapter 16 verses 6 to 10 always had one direction and all of a sudden it said the Spirit hindered us from going there we went somewhere else the spirit was forbidding us to go there I don't know how he did it through circumstances perhaps muddy roads rainstorm I don't know how you get all I know is of the Holy Spirit guides the believer and that is a record you'll see often a next not only chapter 16 Chapter 21 chapter 23 or God calls you to do as well and it's really the Holy Spirit doing that but me add at this point according to the Bible the gifted leaders for churches and ministries are all called by the Holy Spirit if you ever met somebody you're not sure is called or I've seen them some pastors of churches that they got a bill give up the day job gets announced

synonymy I've seen them where they looked lost they don't know what they're doing and they're not really called of God you know what were called the early leaders were sent out by the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit was behind it all and I think it's very important understand that I'll be talking a little bit more about that but calling is important to the Lord's will number 11 another thing the Holy Spirit does is what I call concerned about lost people some people call this the baptism of the Holy Spirit is certainly the power of the Holy Spirit in acts 18 is as you will receive power after the Holy Spirit is come upon you and you will be witnesses unto me all the Jerusalem in all Judea and Samaria under the uttermost part of the earth Paul wrote about in first Corinthians 2 when in when we studied earlier in our study of first Corinthians about the power of the Holy Spirit behind our boldness and are witnessing for the Lord doesn't mean grabbing somebody and threatening them of the going to help it only witches say but it's talking about the freedom to express your faith without embarrassment balls and I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ it is the power of God under salvation every one of believes in one of the things the Holy Spirit will do when you know his power some call that the baptism of the Holy Spirit are you'll have a concern about lost people and by the way the other side of that is true a lot of us quench and grieve the Holy Spirit by our sinful attitudes and actions and so we don't experience this is all as a result we got a go daft or Dan I really care whether anybody hears the gospel whether anybody comes to know the Lord and that's a sad state of affairs in a person who calls themselves a Christian if you really are a Christian have the Holy Spirit you are going care

that others also know the good news that you know and have experience and number 12 and finally is what were talking about and that's commitment of different ministries for the encouragement of believers and that's a whole matter of the gifts of the Holy Spirit to just gone back again if I was opening up a theology book and looking under the doctrine of the Holy Spirit I probably find these words convection regeneration assurance ceiling baptism transformation fruit filling intercession guidance power and gifts what we try to do it just simply set this up so that you know what verse seven is saying so let's go back there were taught about the design of God behind the spiritual gifts that he gives and they relate to others and not yourself and the first point was at the producing of these gifts in the work of the Holy Spirit please don't mix this up but I hear some Christians talk it's like you do it and then you call God in the Blessed no wrong wrong the whole matter of a spiritual gifting exercising your life is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit himself in your life it's why he's in there he wants to use you to be a blessing to other people by the way just to help you relax a little bit he really doesn't need your help a lot of us try to really help the Holy Spirit along you know that he really doesn't need your help he is God after all sold part of the problems just staying out of his way to Matt and not being wicked in your attitudes and in and that's very important so let's let's say come back to this whole idea of it's a work of the Holy Spirit something out have you knows about verse seven is the place of every believer in this notice it says the manifestation of the Spirit is given to was insane your Bible every man nobody's left out the welcome after the meeting and tell me you don't have

your spiritual gift you may not understand what it is a remember discovered it but you have at least one first Peter 4:10 says as each one has received the gift even sold minister one new another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God so the place of every believer in this is important God is a leave anybody out there how long you been a Christian are what you know Lord for 40 years everybody who's a true believer is experiencing the work of the Holy Spirit in your life he wants to use you to encourage others at very important understand the third thing about that burst the design of the gifts is the purpose of the gifts in my old King James Bible you may have a different one and might help you better but in verse seven it says to profit with all the Greek word actually a phrase approach told soon feral it means toward bearing together and right away I learned something very important about the design of gifts is to bring unity and harmony in the body of Jesus Christ and you know what a lot of things we see we see the opposite people using gifts in a wrong way and hurting each other in being correlated dramatic and all of that is in their losing the whole purpose of purposes in every believer will be a blessing every other believer and the Holy Spirit does that so we all bear together we all work together in unity and harmony as a team in the body of Christ Dr. still following are notes we come to a fourth matter about the problem of gifts and that's in verses 8 to 10 would you take your Bible again and look at these verses with me this is one of the most difficult sections of the Bible to understand verse 8:421 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

way the word healing is plural in Greek thing but an asset after it gifts of healing by the same spirit to another the working of miracles to another prophecy to another discerning of spirits to another divers are various kinds of tongs to another the interpretation of tongs and let's stop right there the description of these gifts simply reveals that we all have different ministries and I want to give you several things I do this to help you first it's just a sampling of the gifts is only nine here if I counted right right verses 8 to 10 or just night is just a sampling and maybe want to take us down in the margin somewhere in Romans 12 6 to 8 there are seven gifts mentioned seven there's nine here but one of them is repeated from Romans 12 the word prophecy is repeated both passages so be 7+8 now we have 15 gifts down in first Corinthians 12:28 would you look down their new chapter imagine some more God has set some in the church first apostles secondarily prophets thirdly teachers after that miracles then gives the feelings helps governments diversities are various kinds of tongs enough I'm thinking right there's a mentioned there but three are repeated from first many as 12 eight the And by okay so free from ages five onto 15 we now have 20 in Ephesians 4:11 we had the following gifts mentioned God Christ gave gifts to the church apostles prophets evangelists and pastors and teachers is really want in the same that's for more but three of those are repeated from verse 28 year of A-OK psalmody we got now 21. turn over to first Peter chapter 4 we may have another one right here lot of people don't see this one but just take a look at it with me first Peter chapter 4 in verse nine of first Peter four it says use hospitality one new another without

grudging without complaint nothing like going to somebody's home and have them complain all night about how tough it is to put on a dinner for you right so we want people with the right attitude so use hospitality without grudging I look at the next verse as every man hath received not the RDF it's only a gift in the Greek text even sold minister the same one new another in other words it appears hospitality is a gift award as a great cop those means just that be exactly what is the gift in other words apparently there is a gift of hospitality the Bible's Adobe forgetful to entertain guests in your home is a lot interesting things about that will talk about it later so how many would that make up we had hospitality 22 pairs and were only going over nine of them tonight a man is of A-OK now for easy remembrance of a ready. A lot of stuff tonight it to get out for easy remembrance I want to put these gifts in the five categories okay they can write them down if you want to write fast first what I would call special gifts the reason are special is they are people in another themselves gifted man we would say these special gifts on the give you a reason for each one of them are too equipped God's people to use their gifts that's Ephesians 4 verse 11 and there are four of them apostles prophets evangelists pastor teachers there to equipped God's people to use their gifts now what you put them with the answer is the Bible that's from second Timothy 3:16 and 7:0 those who teach us the word of God to matter who they are if there apostles are going out the summer for missionary field start from scratch they might be a prophet is simply a preacher and not evangelists leading the Lord theirs is all kinds of the gifted man but whoever they are there to equip God's people to use their gifts out

of the equipment by teaching the Bible the Bible equips us according to second Timothy three 1617 of those are special gifts to equipped God's people for their gifts number two we have speaking gifts you might be thinking about well positioned my dear speaking gifts the speaking gifts purpose is to explain God's truth special gifts to equipped God's people use their gifts speaking gifts are to explain God through and there are five of them there's prophecy which doesn't mean to predict the future merely it basically means to speak in public the speak in front of a group of people prophecy teaching which should be richer people or 20,000 exhortation with some people translate counseling word of wisdom notice it's not just wisdom it's a word of wisdom needing you speak it in all some people you look at an essay they never say anything or they must be really wise and then they opened her mouth and say maybe not an army but there are some people in a given difficult situation you simply speak and you know it is the wisest course right there there's also word of knowledge so here's five speaking gifts again you have knowledge I'm glad that you're able to study and research and learning you have a brilliant my wonderful and you speak it your gift isn't just so you can send it home and safe all how marvelous is my intelligence from God know God wants you to use it to bless the lives of other people and by okay now the third categories what we call serving gifts serving gifts and that's to enable God's work to go on we need lots of people here and there are six gifts that are serving gifts is what they are you ready versus leadership amazes stand in front of a crowd and motivate them to action secondly we had administration or governments it's called and simply

our word for administration somebody better tell us how much it costs and give us the printed program or the leaders going to have us going off in the wrong direction and by okay we have ministry serving this person's very task oriented I can tell this person anytime there's a light bulb out he does not wait for a committee at all egos and he takes a libel bound fix no one in the designated need anybody to come along and say all how wonderful is your lightbulb changing technique know he doesn't care about is what you the job done if he sees paper outside of trashcan he picks up six in there that care what a Beethoven do not just task oriented we need is people than showing mercy a gift of showing mercy is compassion on the sick and suffering somebody on a show compassion on those or sick and suffering our using call a pastor and want them to go that's okay if they have the gift if they don't have the gift they may be a lot of trouble okay eliciting as we got this little syndrome in America of your second call a pastor in all viral you I get somebody has compassion towards his reminds remember when my mother came out of the heart surgery he had four bypasses and I was in the recovery room I was her pastor as well as her son and I'm sitting there she woke up she looked at me saw me and he said worse pastor Lloyd I said mothers may use you said like if I want to be taught something I'll tell you I want compassion I get pastor Lloyd until mother talk and another family asked me to come in a hospital visit them and they said their grandfather was dying and they asked me you'll don't tell him he's dying I said why ill killing a sound funny to me but anyway so I went in there was a whole bunch of people to room doctors nurses everything you know portal room I

walked up to him and he grabbed me by the shirt said in my dying is it yes you are he threw his arms around me thank these that I figured some is wrong here is a what he lamented do is I want you to pray that I die right now what kind of embarrassing your family. Graham was the preview healed I don't want to be healed only going to be with the Lord I got canceled the my body it on a separate just pray that I die now I think these of David Gillett so I asked everybody about her head the doctors and nurses took time out to stand there looking at me so I prayed and I say Lord we we've just want your will they squeeze my hand do what I said was okay mortgagor will just take them home right now is what we all her will everybody woke up lifted up the rise and he's glad he's dead the doctor looked across the bed knee said remind me not to call on you when I'm sick and I fell flat one guy came into his room and elected it is said in my that bad. Of watch out but showing mercy is a wonderful gift to over seven minute going to hard times and run into somebody who has a heart and a compassion and merciful spirit we also have the matter of faith will we ought to have faith to believe God but this is something other than that it's a faith that can demonstrate great and mighty things are some people to learn to trust God listen of this in difficult circumstances under persecution I don't have the time to go into that we will later in our studies discernment boy do we need that what is it is discerning of spirits it means in your hearing somebody speak the Bible discusses this quite often and you know they're lying they're not telling the truth of the Bible and sometimes it's hard to tell to some speakers a real smooth you know they could even called from the

Scriptures make you think they are teaching the Bible when in fact they're not that's a very important gift number four we need support gifts this enables God's people and of the support gifts are just three in number but they're important we have the gift called helps of the Greek word means that you are always motivated by relieving somebody know what you want to help somebody else take the load off of them do something for them that is the help gift coming out always related to helping somebody the service person doesn't need that he sees a job he doesn't the help person is motivated by the person who needs his help also the gift of giving what we need that one and some people have that gift there very generous and they don't have any hesitation about it they don't need a tearjerking story to make them region of their pocketbook they just love the when the offering comes or excited most other people groaning but they have a gift and they go with hilarity enjoy it's a wonderful thing to see another course hospitality we need people are hospital hospitable and that's not simply having folks over for dinner the Greek word means loving strangers at the kind of thing where you reach out the people you're in a group you don't wait for people to come to you you're your motivated by the Holy Spirit you just a lot of people you can spot people isolated in any group any meeting anyplace any home you spot on and the more Holy Spirit motivates you to go over editors yourself and get acquainted that many people are motivated automatically by the Holy Spirit I seen that many times then finally we have what we call sign gifts sign gifts and they are to establish God's authority and we have four of them working of miracles gifts of feelings kinds of tongs and interpretation of

tongues and yes we are going to talk about it in detail below a buddy okay mommy tell you what we can do so you can mess is very important so now listeners come back to thinking again about where we were I were talking about the description of the gifts it reveals we all have different ministries and we said to begin with is just a sampling of the gifts the second thing I like you to say about verses 8 to 10 is at the same it's the same spirit gives the gifts that you notice on verse 8 21 is given by the spirit and another by the same spirit repeated again in verse nine God is not being redundant here just for no reason at all the point is it's easy to argue that you somehow are different than somebody else in terms of the source of it you are not it is the same Holy Spirit working in everybody but what comes out is different though you're not the same as somebody else and what comes out but you are the same in terms of what caused it and that's the Holy Spirit now in addition to the fact that it's the same spirit gives these gifts some are similar to each other in verses 8 to 10 if you got your Bible open you might want to mark this in the Greek language search or words for another one is all lost a LL OS if you want to look it up in a concordance it means another of the same kind the other word you know also in English had a Ross something is heterogeneous means it's different is of a different kind and this is one of the strangest things about verses 8 9 and 10 and many Bible teacher skip over it they don't want to be with it they don't know what to do with it and I'm not saying I know what all either but I want to pointed out there's got a be something behind it one thing is for sure is saying that some gifts are similar in nature to other gifts wish I let me per se says 21 is given the word of

wisdom to another that's the word all lost another of the same kind the word of knowledge that makes sense their speaking is the word of wisdom is similar to the word of knowledge is just a different application that one is more of fact oriented research knowledge the other one is more application wisdom being applied to situation but those gifts are similar to one of the interesting things is that in verse nine when he says to another faith he changes the word to another of a different kind but when he follows faith with another the gifts of healing is another of the same kind in verse 10 another working Americans is another of the same kind word prophecy is another of the same kind discerning of spirits is another of the same kind in other words faith healing miracles prophecy discerning of spirits all have something about that that of the say though they are different gifts I would say that's referring to what is supernatural in terms of what they accomplish but other people and other views than the last little problem is at the end of verse 10 to another divers kinds of tongs is to another of a different guy that what he says to another the interpretation and it's another of the same guy meeting tongs and interpretation of the same that makes sense they did with the same issue but they are different than the previous So what you have is three sets 25 and two clearly marked by the Greek text Holy Spirit of God is the author every word is important there's got a be a reason one thing is that they are similar in nature or the differences might be the result of how the supernatural evidence of them like healing and miracles and etc. might be displayed it's an interesting problem by one final thing in verse 11 we have the distribution of the gifts that rests upon the sovereignty of God

and right here we need to talk very pointedly with everybody there's more hurt caused in churches over trying to get gifts you don't have and you can shake a stick are a lot of people being encouraged to pray for and deceit gifts that they want to have and that produces carnal attitudes feelings of spiritual superiority all kinds of things let me make it clear from verse 11 it says all these the sampling work at that one and the selfsame spirit dividing to every man severally as he will is a Holy Spirit's will to simple thing this verse says that the Holy Spirit works the gifts through the believers and secondly that the Holy Spirit wills the distribution of them it has nothing to do with what you desire what you want and I want to try to illustrate myself so you can all have some fight over and nobody be offended okay hopefully I when I went to college or sly I mainly was in the sports I like sports a and that I really knew that the Bible didn't list that is one of the gifts but anyway I love sports all sports played them all so for in terms of ministry I do know what I wanted to do but I did like music by got involved in music was leading men's chorus of 400 and writing the scores for it that had an orchestra also it all electronics stuff and got involved musically through a radio broadcast he was in college and not... Music is it in on I love you as I still do as you all know I I love love all kinds love the instrument parts I love the scene parts I love everything about and I really got involved heavily I thought this is what God wanted me to do and along the way of a fellow I asked me to teach on a Friday night in the city not too far from our account the bunch of kids as a lot of know you I do that are not that they're okay and the moment I taught that night all of a sudden music is wonderful as it is to me was not really my

interest I can explain this but I knew that night that God wanted me to teach the Bible

it so I decided to a great every year I was in college and later course the a lot more in graduate school at all that I could Bible took the history change from major got ancient history is I would help me understand about I just inhaled God's word I love this book and the more I got into it the more I wanted each of the more I want to do this and I knew anything else as I look over all these years 42 years now preaching and teaching the Bible as I look over these years I have found many things that people are trying to mold me into and you know what happens when you get in the wrong slot everybody suffers them I know I've done about this like people think well you you should do this and so they kind of put pressure on you to do what you're not gifted to do I like each of the Bible that takes time to study and I love the study I think I've never lost it I still love the study I rather than some respects rather study even teach you I will be offended by that Bacchus child learn more I got a find out more as a measure matter of trying but there are other things you have to do and people come along safe while data we really need you to lead it if I do have a gift of leadership I type right now administration I'm not thrilled about I got to do it but I'm not thrilled about that without preconditions I don't have that gift a lot of people they get why does your deposition you have to do it and I don't like it so I often forget details you know those are important things but somebody better than me a list of what you want me to say and I'll do it but I don't really care for that but just think the Bible now you're all looking at me in your thinking this point

needs help we need to get the counseling services for him I actually untried illustrates we like to use you but I did think about several of you but anyway my point is that isn't it interesting that other people can also pressure you away from the very thing that God wants you to do that can get you involved in doing something it really isn't your area giftedness and what will happen is everybody around usually get frustrated a got a get frustrated and that's why we need to be very very careful about pressuring people is a you know you would just make a great so-and-so you don't know that let the Holy Spirit work in people's lives now to illustrate I must hurry must take music as a good illustration apparently it's not a spiritual gift it's early to be a natural talent for some people don't have outlived you feel that you can't saying where the hell of the of electrical not all of you good grade like a happy audience razor heads were no wonder wherever trouble saying okay but the truth of the matter is you appreciated that when you see it you hear it usable I wish I can do that are always a ablative piano or RealPlayer trumpeters something or violator guitar I wish I could say guys not a spiritual gift it's it can be acquired abilities you could go and take lessons learned how and some people have what we call natural talent therefore music if you think about it the spiritual gifts was that we have a whole group of people appear all interested music the spiritual gifts could be manifested through the Avenue of music that if we had a whole group of fierce somebodies got organize and get it together and hopefully somebody's going to manage the details to make sure the sheets are up there for people all the cords a wonderful thing it everything else and when you get somebody doing that is

just a loose cannon love to play you know and they're trying to organize this tribal anybody know what I mean is music in the giftgiving group where there's no position management it is like a disaster ever demanded that which is right as own eyes is likable the judges again then have you ever notice when some people like sing or play you feel like you're being ministered to in a deep way let's say compassion for tough times are going through what seems like there ministering your heart to get you through something and then are other people the audience and are getting depressed listening to the same stop is of a listening grandmother differences and then are some of us are we like people come up there really go after you had to move this thing you know and then some of us who are hurting or saying boycotts and NEC even in music all the gifts could be manifested through this music can people counsel to music and they teach the room is absolutely the issue you need to be careful to separate what is the spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit's work into your life from the Avenue that he may be using it in and I think one of the blessings is when you find that wonderful piece in your heart to your word God wants you to be of ever been in home where you know the person whose foot non-this thing is the gift of hospitality there is no doubt about it there's joy is worn their fees there's no frustration and then have you been in a home where they don't have hospitality but the trying to do a good job in everybody's worn-out by the time the evenings over your exhausted only been a couple hours to get way to get home but there are other people it just flows that the please understand it's the Holy Spirit that is working the gifts in our lives and he

gives you what he wants to give you a part of the struggle we have in our lives as we mature is finding what that is in finding where we belong is when you're where you belong everybody is relieved and it's a blessing and the work of God continues to thrive and when you're in the wrong slot everybody suffers both a beautiful thing to have gifts just remember it's the work of the Holy Spirit Amen but father we thank you so much for the privilege of just studying these very difficult matters and Lord I know that there are many of us said want to know how you would gifted us that we might enjoy and be blessed by what you have given and bless the lives of other people more I see Howard gifts so the areas of our maximum effectiveness with minimum wariness tedious Lord to concentrate as much as possible in our priorities plans upon that which is really your spirit working through us to bless the body of Christ Board thank you that you have given these gifts that every believer that tells me right off the bat whether I ever discover what my gift is it tells me that you Lord want to use me that that's the lives of other people to pull within my heart and others consciousness that I would be self-conscious of me to be more concerned about what others are needing what I'm in Lord I thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit himself Lord we realize that without that are never going to see the kingdom of God we need to be born again of the Holy Spirit Lord I don't know the hearts of all these people here but you do you know how many are here maybe even not sure about this whole discussion spiritual gifts or even understand that in their hearts they know that something needs to change inside I thank you Lord for showing us in the Bible that Jesus paid for all of

our sin that he's alive he's not dead is coming back and you've told us if we would confess our sin if we would believe that Jesus died and rose again commit our lives to him we would be safe got I pray that by the power of your Holy Spirit you would draw us to the Lord Jesus Christ we turn to him before it's too we thank you in the wonderful name of our Savior Messiah our blessed Lord Jesus we pray amen

OUTLINE
INTRODUCTION & REVIEW

THE **PROBLEM** OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS - I CORINTHIANS 12:1-11

The **DISCUSSION** on the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer - 1-3

The **DIFFERENCES** among the believers are caused by God - 4-6

THE **DESIGN** OF THE GIFTS RELATES TO OTHERS, NOT YOURSELF 7

The **Producing** Of The Gifts Is The Work Of The Holy Spirit

“To each is given the manifestation of the

Spirit for the common good...”

Greek: *phanerosis* – used 2x – 93x in NT

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT INVOLVES 12 THINGS:

1. **CONVICTION** of sin, righteousness, & judgment

(Conviction) *John 16:7-11*

2. **CONVERSION** – (Regeneration)

John 3:1-8; Titus 3:5-7; I Peter 1:2, 22-25

3. **CONVINCING** of our present relationship to Jesus Christ (***Assurance***) *Rom. 8:14-*

17; I John 3:24; 5:6-13

4. **CONFIDENCE** in our future blessings in Jesus Christ

(Sealing) *II Cor. 1:20-22; Eph. 1:13-14*

5. **CONNECTION** to the body of Jesus Christ

(Baptism) *I Cor. 12:13*

6. **CHRISTLIKENESS** in all we think, say, and do

(Transformation) *Rom. 12:1-2; II Cor. 3:18*

7. **CONTROL** of our sinful desires

(Fruit) *Gal. 5:16-26; Eph. 5:3-14*

8. **CHANGE** in our attitudes

(Filling) *Eph. 5:15-21*

9. **COMFORT** in our trials

(Intercession) *John 14:16-18; Rom. 8:26-30*

10. **CALLING** to do the Lord's will

(Guidance) *Acts 16:6-10; 21:10-14; 23:11*

11. **CONCERN** about the lost

(Power) *Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 2:2-5*

12. **COMMITMENT** of different ministries to encourage believers

(Gifts) *1 Cor. 12:11*

The **Place** of every believer - "*to each*" – *1 Peter 4:10*

The **Purpose** of the gifts - "*for the common good*"

Greek: *symphero* - bring unity & harmony in the body of Christ

LIST OF 22 GIFTS IN NEW TESTAMENT	<u>SPECIAL</u> GIFTS to <u>equip</u> God's people	<u>SPEAKING</u> GIFTS to <u>explain</u> God's truth
<i>7 - Romans 12:6-8</i> <i>9 - 1 Cor. 12:8-10</i> <i>8 - 1 Cor. 12:28</i> <i>4 - Eph. 4:11</i> <i>1 - 1 Peter 4:9-10</i>	Apostles Evangelists Prophets Pastor/Teachers	Prophecy Teaching Exhortation Word of wisdom Word of knowledge
<u>SERVING</u> GIFTS to <u>enable</u> God's work	<u>SUPPORT</u> GIFTS to <u>enable</u> God's people	<u>SIGN</u> GIFTS to <u>establish</u> God's authority
Leadership Administration	Helps Giving	Working of miracles Gifts of healing

Ministering
Showing Mercy
Faith
Discernment

Hospitality

Kinds of tongues
Interpretation of tongues

- I. THE COMMAND TO KNOW THE GIFTS (12:1–3): This knowledge will help dispel any ignorance concerning the giver of the gifts.
- II. THE SOURCE OF THE GIFTS (12:4–6, 11): They are imparted by the Holy Spirit.
- III. THE EXTENT OF THE GIFTS (12:7, 29–30)
 - A. **Each believer is given at least one gift** (12:7).
 - B. **No believer is given all the gifts** (12:29–30).
- IV. THE DIVERSITY OF THE GIFTS (12:8–10, 28)
 - A. **Wisdom** (12:8a)
 - B. **Knowledge** (12:8b)
 - C. **Faith** (12:9a)
 - D. **Healing** (12:9b, 28e)
 - E. **Miracles** (12:10a, 28d)
 - F. **Prophecy** (12:10b, 28b)
 - G. **Discernment** (12:10c)
 - H. **Tongues** (12:10d, 28h)
 - I. **Interpretation of Tongues** (12:10e)
 - J. **Apostleship** (12:28a)
 - K. **Teaching** (12:28c)
 - L. **Helping** (12:28f)
 - M. **Administration** (12:28g)
- V. THE ANALOGY OF THE GIFTS (12:12–27): Paul compares the body of Christ and its many spiritually gifted members to the human body with its many physical members.
 - A. **Each member in both bodies performs a vital task** (12:12–13, 18).
 - B. **No member in either body can be independent of the other members** (12:14–17, 19–24).
 - 1. *The foot and the ear are not to show envy toward the hand and the eye* (12:14–17).
 - 2. *The eye and the head are not to show pride toward the hands and the feet* (12:21).

C. Each member in both bodies is to rejoice and suffer with the other members (12:19–20, 22–27).

VI. THE GREATEST OF THE GIFTS (12:31): Paul ends this chapter by promising to show “the most excellent way,” which he does in chapter 13.

The Gifts of the Body, Part 1

Turn in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter 12, please. For the last few weeks, in preparation for a study of the book of Ephesians, we have been studying the concept of the body of Christ.

We have talked about the body of Christ in terms of its nature, and we're not talking about His physical body, but the Church which is His new body. We've talked about the witness of the body, that is, the importance of the body communicating. That is we who belong to Christ, who are His Church, who make up this body of believers, witnessing not only by our individual testimony, but by collective love and unity.

Tonight we come to the third in this series entitled "The Gifts of the Body." The Holy Spirit has specially empowered and enabled those of us who belong to Jesus Christ to carry out some very, very important functions.

Now, by way of introduction, some thoughts. God wants to reach this whole world with His truth. Obviously. In the Old Testament, Israel was God's vehicle to reach the world. In the Gospels Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Christ Himself and His disciples were the vehicle to reach the world. Today, and since the 2 Chapter of Acts, right up until today, the Church is the vehicle through which God has designed to communicate to the world.

And it is not only by the words that we say that we communicate, but it is also by what we are that we communicate. And that's the reason that Jesus said in John 13, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, that you have" – what? – "love one for another." And also in John 17 that all men would know that the Father sent Christ if we were one. And He prayed that they may be one, "That all men might know that the Father sent Me."

Our witness then is not only a verbal witness, it is not only a communication of the Gospel in specifics, it is the witness of love and unity. And when we are one in love, the world will find our witness devastating. And so, the Church then is the vehicle by which God designed to communicate to the world His nature and His truth. And that's been the case since the 2nd chapter of Acts, when the Church was begun on the day of Pentecost.

A unity within the Church on the basis of humility and love becomes then our greatest

testimony. But needless to say, although all believers are one in terms of position, that is 1 Corinthians 12:13 says – you have it right there – “By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jew, Greek, bond, free; we’ve all been made to drink into one Spirit.” So, though we are one in position, though we have been made one in terms of the Holy Spirit’s ministry and salvation and putting us into the body of Christ, though we are one in fact, we are not one in terms of our activities or our actions. And we certainly are not one in spirit and witness.

Christianity’s testimony has been decimated because it has been fractioned and hacked up into pieces, and you’ve got this little group over here, and this little group over here, and that big group over there, and so forth and so on. And people stand up and say that we’re this, and we do that, and it’s all fractioned.

Consequently, though we are one in position, the world does not see us in practice, and we do not have a singular testimony of humility and love. Now you know that if God wants us to be one, that Satan wants us not to be one. And so, while the prayer of Christ was that we would be one, while the activity of the Spirit was to make us one, all of the energy of Satan is to fraction us. So, whenever you come into a situation where you or me or anybody else is a divisive issue, we can be assured, if it’s in the body of Christ, that we are the agent of Satan because Christ wants to unify; Satan wants to divide.

Now, may I add just a footnote? There is no scriptural justification for the existence of all of the present divisions of the Church. You know, there weren’t any divisions denominationally in the New Testament? None at all. In fact, all of the divisions of the Church are totally and explicitly contrary to the straightforward teaching of the Word of God. The whole intention of Christ in forming the body was that we may be one body, not all fractioned into little parts.

Now, how was the body formed? Was it formed in discord, or was it formed in unity? Obviously, it was formed in unity. In the book of Acts, the body of Christ – the Church – was formed in a prayer meeting. In the upper room of a house in Jerusalem, the disciples of Jesus gathered to prayer. Out of that faith and obedience and waiting in prayer by a company of humble disciples, God brought into being the Church, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

There in that prayer gathering, in an upper room in Jerusalem, the hour of another divine dispensation struck, and men and women, filled with the Holy Spirit and possessing gifts of the Holy Spirit, went down out of that room, into the streets, to preach Christ crucified, risen, and the day of God's free grace.

It was a group of humble people. There weren't any great ones; there weren't any mighty ones. They didn't get an organizational structure; they just prayed and waited. Hardest thing in the world to do. They prayed and waited.

God said to them, through Christ, "The Church will be born in Jerusalem." Christ had told them this, "Not only will it be born in Jerusalem, but you will evangelize the world." Now had Christ said to the Church today, "The Church will be born in Jerusalem," or, "Something will happen in Jerusalem, and you will evangelize the world," immediately we would start master planning, organizing, get the committees going. Got to get a chairman, have an election. You know what they did? They just prayed and sat there. They didn't even have an evangelism committee.

And you know something else? They were told to begin world evangelism, and they didn't begin it for seven years. You say, "It's terrible." No. They wanted a solid foundation. They wanted strong, capable evangelists. It takes time. God said, "The Church will begin at Jerusalem, and you'll evangelize the world," and they prayed, and they waited. And when God's Spirit got ready to act, He could act through them because they were already filled with the Spirit.

And you know something? When they went out of that room, when the Church began, all of them evangelized. And that's the way it ought to be. There is no believer who's not responsible to evangelize. Oh, you may not have the specific gift of evangelism, but you are witnesses. Every one of them went out of that room and publically preached the wonderful works of God. In fact, they did it by a divine miracle in a language they didn't even know. That was the birth of the Church. That was the birth of the body of Christ. It was born in a prayer meeting, where they prayed and waited. It was all in the energy of the Holy Spirit, and every member – every

member – that was part of that prayer meeting was engaged in the activity through the Spirit’s power.

And from that moment on, friends, every single member that’s been added to the Church has been added the same way. “For by one Spirit were you” – what’s the next word? – “all baptized into one body.” Every believer who’s ever come to Jesus Christ, since that birth of the Church, has come the same way by the Spirit of God’s power, placing him into the body of Christ. We are as singularly one today in 1971 as we were one in Acts 2. And every one of us entered the body the same way.

Now, that early Church was fantastic. They were exciting. And the reason was this: they were all – now watch this – they were all filled with the Spirit. Now, can you imagine what would happen if a total church was filled with the Spirit? The energy of the Spirit would fire through that body, and it would be devastating. That Church was filled with the Spirit. Secondly, they were all exercising their spiritual gifts. Thirdly, they were all preaching the Gospel. Can you imagine that? All filled with the Spirit; all exercising their gifts; all preaching the Gospel. And they had a unity of humble love that was manifest everywhere. The world was flabbergasted. They couldn’t believe it. They gave such a tremendous witness that daily souls were added, weren’t they? Daily, daily, daily, daily souls were added.

Now, bring it up to us. In order for us to be an effective witness as a body, as the early Church was, we must be just as healthy as they were. Right? We must also be not organized – Spirit filled. Not super committed – no, just exercising our spiritual gifts and all preaching the Gospel. We have to be just as healthy as the early Church. The standard for us is no different at all.

Now the pressure is different. Right? You know what the missing ingredient in the Church today is that makes it so hard for us to be like the early Church? There’s one missing ingredient. You know what it is? Persecution. You know what persecution does? It drives out all the tares. It gets rid of them. Why if all of sudden the United States government declared that Christianity was illegal, and everybody who was a Christian was going to be shot, what do you think our attendance would be on Sunday? And you know what we’d have? We’d have

Spirit-filled, redeemed, committed people, and all the rest would just fade by the wayside. Persecution really puts it down to the nitty-gritty. See? And that's the thing we're missing. But the standards are no different. We have to be mature, functioning, loving, humble, Spirit-filled, exercising our gifts, preaching the Gospel just like that early Church.

Now you say, "Yeah, but we didn't have what they had." Oh, yes we do. The only thing we don't have is persecution. But brother, we've got everything else, because you know what everything else was? One thing: the Holy Spirit. That was everything else.

Now, Christ wants the Church to be powerful. He wants the Church to be mature. He wants the Church to be functioning. He wants the Church to be growing. He wants the Church to be witnessing and manifesting His love. Now, in order to do that – now here we go – in order to do that, God designed a plan within the confines of the Church, His body. And I'm not talking about a Church building or organized church, but the true Church.

Now, here was God's plan: in order to make the Church really grow and really have a unified witness, God designed that every single member of His body, every believer, every Christian, every body member would have a certain function or functions within the body.

Now, hang onto your hat. Every Christian then has a function within the body that results – watch it – in the health of the total body. In other words, if God designed that we be a healthy body – growing, maturing – functioning, witnessing – then every member has a ministry that lends itself to the health of that body.

Now, the human body is the analogy, and the human body is all kinds of organs that interact, all kinds of limbs that interact. If you have just one of your organs that doesn't function, then the whole body is sick. And the same thing is true of the body of Christ: every organ has a function that results in the health or sickness of the whole body.

So, every believer has a vital ministry as a vital organ of the body. And if the body is to be healthy and mature, and thus a single dynamic, edified, built-up testimony to the world, then every believer must actively and intensely involve himself in the function which God has given

him. Your service and your ministry makes the body healthy because it carries strength to the other vital parts of the body.

Your failure to serve on the other hand, your unfaithfulness, your carnality, your self-centeredness, your divisive spirit, your laziness spiritually are all non-functions, and non-functions make the body sick, crippled, and retard its health, its growth and maturity. And as a result, they retard its witness. God has designed you into the body as a vital, functioning organ if you're a Christian. You must – you must minister to the body if the body is to be healthy.

Now, God's will for the body is that we be like Christ. Christlikeness. That's His will for the body. In Ephesians 4:13 it says this, just listen, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith" – unity – "of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man" – watch this – "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of" – whom? – "Christ."

You know what our total body is to be? Like Jesus Christ. Is the total body like Christ? No. No. Is Christ divided? Paul said that, didn't he? Is Christ divided? No. Is the body divided? Yes. Is the body like Christ? No. Is the body supposed to be like Christ? Yes. Why isn't the body like Christ? Because it's divided. Right. Why is the body divided? Because some members are non-functioning organs.

God's will for the body is that we be like Christ. You see, here's what the point is, folks: through the Church – the body – Christ wants to manifest His own character. He wants to manifest His person through us, not only as individuals – and that's what He wants to do as individuals, doesn't He? – but as a body. He wants to manifest His person through the body of Christ. We are to be individually like Christ; we are to be in unity like Christ.

And the method, as I said, to accomplish this Christlikeness is to give every member of the body a function that ministers to the rest of the body. Certain spiritual gifts that each of us have through which the Holy Spirit can manifest himself to the whole body and bring the whole body to maturity and health.

Now, keep this thought in mind, and you're going to have to think with me on this: it's not going to come easy. All the gifts were, in their fullest sense – now watch this – complete in Christ. All the gifts were, in their fullest sense, complete in Christ. The gift of preaching. Could Christ preach? Could He preach? The gift of teaching. Could He teach? Showing mercy. Could He show mercy? Helps. Ruling. I don't care what the gift is, it was complete in Christ. And the reason He gave each member these different gifts is He wanted a composite, Christlikeness. Do you see the point?

Every one of the gifts that we have was complete and perfect in Christ. And He gives us, as members, these various gifts that we might be built up to the fullness of whom? Christ. You see?

The Holy Spirit didn't say, "Hmm, gift. I'll take a couple of those, have those ones. Well, there's a nice one to have." No. Every single gift that the Holy Spirit gave to the Church was a characteristic of Jesus Christ. And He was the totally complete and full person, just as God wants the Church to be. And you as a believer, you want to know something? The only way you'll ever be that full stature man in Christ is when you have all those gifts being ministered to you. Did you know that? You see, you'll never be like Jesus Christ until you characteristically have been built up in all the areas that He was built up in.

That's why I must minister my gift to you, because as I minister my gift to you, it builds you up in that area. And though – let's say my gift is preaching. If I minister to you in the gift of preaching, maybe you'll never have the gift of preaching, but you'll learn just from my ministering to you how to communicate on a better level. And so, I've built you up in that way.

Maybe your gift is showing mercy, and you minister that gift to me, and I learn a little more how to show mercy, and I'm built up in that area. And pretty soon, as every member ministers to each other, we're all built up as individuals to be like Christ and to show forth all His attributes. And then collectively, as a body, we manifest the total person of Christ.

So, you see, every spiritual gift was taken from the nature of Christ, and they are gifts given to His new body, the Church, that we might individually be like Him as they minister the gifts to us, and that we might as a body be like Him, functioning with all those various gifts.

Now, these gifts – and the word in the New Testament *charismata* means grace gifts. They're gifts of grace; you don't earn them. The more spiritual you get, the more gifts you get? No, wrong. You don't earn them; they're grace gifts. They are so critical – they are critical to the health of the body. And a sick body is a sick evangelist. And if we're going to reach the world, if we're going to reach down the street, if we're going to really have a testimony that is devastating, it'll only happen when we are one ministering in love to each other these gifts. Friends, this is important stuff.

Now, go to 1 Corinthians chapter 12 if you're not already there. And I want to show you four things about the gifts, about spiritual grace gifts. First, the importance of the spiritual gifts. Secondly, the source of spiritual gifts. Thirdly, the power of spiritual gifts. Fourthly, the extent of spiritual gifts. The importance, the source, the power, and the extent.

Number one, the importance of spiritual gifts. Now, we have already talked about this, haven't we? Why are they important? Because the body can't be like Christ unless they're ministered. And we all grow up together in the maturity in all of these areas that characterize Christ. How can I say I am like Christ, I have Christlikeness, if I don't know how to show mercy, if I don't know how to teach to some degree? And how can I know these things unless somebody who has that gift teaches me. Right? And, you know, it's not a human capacity in which you use the gift; it's the Spirit through you teaching me. And we'll talk about that more, but basically, see, they are important because unless we minister our spiritual gifts – not in our own energy, but in the energy of the Spirit – but unless we minister our spiritual gifts, the body is not built up. If it's not built up, it's not like Christ, and I'm not like Christ. And the prayer was that we would be like Him. And if we're going to have any witness in the world, it'll be when we're like Him.

All right, the importance of spiritual gifts. Verse 1 – and that's the verse that we'll deal with, no other verse on this subject. The importance of spiritual gifts. “Now, concerning spiritual

gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.” Now, unfortunately, people are ignorant. The Corinthians were grossly ignorant. And people today are ignorant. Some people abuse the spiritual gifts. Some people have gone way out in left field somewhere; they’ve climbed the fence; they’re out in the parking lot in the area of spiritual gifts. All strange things. You know? Emphasizing the sign gifts, the miraculous gifts.

And we often stand back and say, “Oh, look at them; they’re way out, man. What’s that weird things?” And so, we just take spiritual gifts and file it somewhere. And if some are guilty of abusing spiritual gifts, we are guilty of neglecting them. It seems to be indifference on the one hand or fanaticism on the other hand and nothing in the middle. And here Paul says, “I don’t want you to be ignorant, brethren, I want you to know about spiritual gifts.”

The understanding of spiritual gifts is so critical to the life of the body of Christ and the testimony of the Gospel in the world, that it ranks with the cardinal essentials of salvation and the Gospel. Dear people, this is essential. It is not a passing fancy; it is one of the keys to all the revelation of God and to the ministry in the world today that you understand spiritual gifts.

And this church right here, Grace Community Church, or any other church, or the total body will never be what it could be, it will never be what Jesus prayed that it would be, it’ll never be what the Holy Spirit gifted it and empowered it to be until we are no longer ignorant about spiritual gifts, but rather we understand them and we begin to use them in the energy of the Spirit.

So, we see the importance of spiritual gifts, don’t we? Very, very important. If you don’t understand spiritual gifts, friend, you are ignorant of a critical basic of God’s revelation.

All right, secondly, the source of spiritual gifts, verse 11. We’re passing verse 2 to 10; we’ll come back. Verse 11, the source of spiritual gifts. Where do they come from? Verse 11, “But all these” – and he’s just referred to the spiritual gifts, some of them, “worketh that one and the very same” – who? – “Spirit, dividing to every man severally as” – what are the next to words? – “He will.”

What is the source of spiritual gifts? The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit. Where do gifts come from? They come from the Holy Spirit; that's where they come from. And this is so clear in this verse; it's also clear that God is involved. In chapter 7, verse 7, it says, "I would that all men [were] even as I myself. But ever man hath his proper gift of God." God gives these gifts through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit then takes the various gifts and distributes them to the body member. The day that you were born into the family of God, the day that you received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, the Spirit of God distributed to you a certain gift. And through those gifts – now watch it; here's the key – through those gifts, the Holy Spirit wants to minister to you and to the rest of the body.

Let me clarify it. Through those gifts, the Holy Spirit wants to minister through you to the body. Now, we'll talk more about that in a moment. A spiritual gift – we'll define it for you – a spiritual gift is a Spirit-given ability which acts as a channel through which the Holy Spirit ministers to the body. You got it? Say it again: a spiritual gift is a Spirit-given ability which acts as a channel through which the Spirit ministers to the body. Did you get it? The spiritual gift is not the end in itself, is it? The spiritual gift is only the channel through which the Holy Spirit operates.

Let me add a footnote. Spiritual gifts had nothing to do with spirituality. Every believer has spiritual gifts. Even the backslidden ones. Because a spiritual gift doesn't mean you're spiritual. All a spiritual gift is is a Spirit-given vehicle through which the Spirit can minister. The only question is whether the channel is clear or whether it's all plugged up. That's the only question.

Spirit gifts are only Spirit-given vehicles through which the Spirit of God ministers to the whole body; they are not signs of spirituality. You know, it's amazing how many people think that they've attained some spiritual gift, and they've gotten instant spirituality. No. Never had anything to do with spirituality. You can have all the gifts of the record of Scripture, and it wouldn't mean you're spiritual.

And would you please notice that it says at the end of verse 11, “The Holy Spirit divides to every man severally as He will.” It’s also amazing to me that people think they can seek certain gifts. You can’t. People think they can tarry for certain gifts. You can’t do that either. The Holy Spirit gives them as He will to whom He will. Some have even developed gimmicks and devices, little techniques to get certain gifts, and they try to generate artificial emotional and satanic activity, and then they call it the gifts of the Spirit. This goes on all the time, and it usually deals with the miraculous gifts, which we’ll talk about in a little while, like tongues and so forth and so on.

I read a little pamphlet entitled “Ten Easy Steps to Speaking in Tongues.” And it started out by saying you say a certain word, then hit yourself on the chin. Now, that is the most ludicrous kind of biblical scholarship I’ve ever heard of. The Spirit of God is the source of these gifts, not some gimmick. Not a little piece of paper that says, “Ten Easy Steps to the Gifts of the Spirit.”

The Holy Spirit gives the gift by divine will and divine choice, not ours. The Holy Spirit knows what gifts are needed. He knows where they’re needed, when they’re needed, and who is to receive them to be ministered. And thus does He give them. And if each member uses His gifts, then there is a total complementing, and the work is accomplished to the glory of God as the body is built up.

You know, you can have the gift, given by the Holy Spirit, and be doing nothing about it. It’s interesting that a guy fell into that problem. And his name was Timothy. And Paul, who chased Timothy around like a mother hen, constantly picking at him, which is a healthy thing to do, said to him in 1 Timothy 4:14 – listen to this – “Neglect not the gift that is in thee” – see? He had the gift. Oh, he’d become sidetracked by certain people who were pressuring him, and he was becoming a little upset, and he was even developing an ulcer, you know, and Paul told him to take a little wine for his stomach’s sake. And he was really uptight.

And Paul says, “Hey, Timothy, don’t neglect the gift.” He didn’t lose the gift. He had it; he just neglected it. Second Timothy 1:6 Paul puts it another way. Evidently Timothy still wasn’t doing too well. Second Timothy 1:6, “Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God.” See? “Get it going, Timothy.” You got it; use it.

Well, essentially, beloved, that's what I'm saying to you. You're a believer. You've got a gift; don't neglect it. Stir it up; activate it in the energy of the Spirit. Now, please notice that a gift is not a natural ability. You can't say, "My gift is making pie." That is not a gift of the Spirit. That's a wonderful gift, and I would be happy to verify whether or not you have that gift. But that is not the gift of the Spirit.

Somebody says, "Well, my gift is to do this kind of thing," or, "My gift is to work with my hands," or, "My gift is to sing." And those are not spiritual gifts; those are natural abilities. Now, the spiritual gifts are sovereignly-bestowed manifestations of the Spirit's power through a divinely-given ability.

Let me illustrate it to you. Now no doubt the apostle Paul was a graphic illustration of the difference between a true gift and just a physical ability. Now let me show you why. Paul obviously had natural ability to express himself publically. He just was – he was glib, sharp, fast, really quick. He had a natural ability to talk. But it is perfectly clear – and I want you to mark this as critical to understand – it is perfectly clear that Paul never – now watch it – he never regarded his ability to talk as a gift of the Spirit. He was a man of tremendous learning. He could have used his knowledge of philosophy and literature and composed eloquent, convincing orations, couldn't he? And he could have delivered them with magnificent ability. But you know what Paul said? Now watch it, he said this, 1 Corinthians 2:2, just listen, "I came not with surpassing skill of speech or wisdom, for no knowledge did I purpose to display among you but the knowledge of Christ and Him" – what? – "crucified."

You see what Paul's saying? He's saying, "I have a natural ability to speak; I have a natural ability to communicate; I know philosophy. I took it all, stuck it over there and said, 'Spirit, speak through me.'" The Holy Spirit expresses Himself through man's powers. He uses a man's knowledge, but it is in a supernatural way, apart from that man's own ability.

And it's interesting about this. Here's another way to illustrate it. There are a lot of people who have the gift of gab, and they aren't preachers. If a man has a natural aptitude along that line, maybe the Holy Spirit will elect to use it; maybe He won't. A gift or a manifestation of the Spirit is of the Spirit, not of the flesh.

And you say, “Well, look as so-and-so, boy, they can get up, and they can just rattle off things, and boy, they are really, really fluid in their speech. Maybe God will put them in a totally different area in the body of Christ. Maybe they’ll be ministering in a way that isn’t even visible publically, and yet they may have the gift of gab.

On the other side, I had a friend in seminary – a dear friend. He had the worst stuttering problem I have ever seen. So bad – and he and I were very close – that I used to say to him, “If you’ve got 15 minutes, I’d like to have a 5-minute conversation with you.” But he and I really were close. And he – I said that in love, and he understands, so don’t think I was hard on him because – we’ll never forget that he got an *A* in pulpit speech, and I got a *B*.

But anyway – I’ll never live that down. He gets me about that all the time. But he had a very severe speech impediment. And your first reaction would have been, “That guy – no way does that guy belong in the ministry as a preacher.” Today he’s a preacher and a teacher. A pastor at a church. He became beloved, and he is one of the finest expositors of the Word of God I have ever heard, and he is one of the most lucid speakers I have ever heard, and he stutters all the way from the beginning to the end of his message. But you know what? He may not have the fluid tongue physically, but brother, he has the gift of preaching.

God may elect to use your natural ability. Then again, he may bypass and give you a gift that has no connection with your natural ability. And so, when you talk about spiritual gifts, you’re not relying upon physical power for the production of spiritual fruit. All that is is a hindrance. That’s a pain in the neck to the Holy Spirit. And oh, that’s so clearly shown in so many places in the Bible.

I think of one that comes to my mind, 1 Peter 4 I think it is. Yes, 1 Peter 4:10. Now, here’s the distinction; this is beautiful, very graphic. It’s illustrating just what I’ve told you. “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another.” In other words, minister your gift. Right? Minister your gift, 1 Peter 4:10. Now, watch this: “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.” Did you know that some people can speak and not be speaking the oracles of God? Not be really exercising their gift? There’s a difference between the ability to speak and the Spirit-given gift of preaching.

So, he says, “If you’re going to speak, speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as the ability which God giveth.” Did you know that a man could have the gift of ministering and still minister in the flesh? That’s what it says. Do you know that a man can have the gift of preaching and still stand in a pulpit and preach in the flesh? And I can verify that by personal experience. Just because you have the Spirit gift doesn’t mean that every time you do that you’re doing it in the Spirit. And so, he says to let him do it as of the ability which – what? God giveth. See?

Oh, it’s so easy. I look at my own, and it would be so easy for me to stand up in front of an audience and just fire out, and I could go on forever. Right? Because I can talk. And it must be a constant battle in my own heart and mind to speak not humanly but as the oracles of God to bring my gift into subjection to the Holy Spirit. Because I could minister my gift, just as you can, in the flesh.

And so, you see, the gift does not necessarily mean you’re spiritual. It doesn’t at all. It doesn’t have anything to do with spirituality. The gift is given by the Holy Spirit, not necessarily in accordance with what you think is your ability or your disability.

Not only that, thirdly, you can minister your gift either in the energy of the Spirit or in the energy of the flesh. The fact that one has the gift doesn’t necessarily mean he ministers it in the Holy Spirit. And the gift is no sign of spirituality. None at all. Just because I have the gift to preach, that doesn’t make me spiritual. I have the same struggles with sin that you have. And sometimes I think my struggle is greater than yours must be, although maybe that’s not true. But you know you have that.

In 1 Corinthians 14, important statement. See, this is really important. 1 Corinthians 14:32 says this, “And the spirits of the prophets are” – what? – “subject to the prophets.” Do you know what that means? That even a prophet’s got to subject his own spirit. Just because you’ve been called to be a preacher, that doesn’t mean you don’t have to subject yourself anymore. I’m not spiritual because I preach; I’m not even infallible.

Verse 29 of 1 Corinthians 14. 1 Corinthians 14:29, look what it says, “Let the prophets speak two or three, and let others judge.” Did you know that? Did you know that the prophets aren’t even so infallible, they’ve got to have three people and somebody else judge who’s right. Some people think just because they’ve got the gift, that settles it. No, sir. Even the prophets had to check with two or three, work it out together, and then have somebody else judge who was right.

Gifts are no sign of spirituality; they are no guarantee that you’re always right. Gifts are not always necessarily in connection with your own supposed abilities or disabilities. And you can minister your gift in the flesh, or you can minister your gift in the Spirit.

Spiritual gifts are important. They are critically important. They are important because we saw them ranked with the cardinal gifts, the cardinal doctrines of salvation. They are important because they’re needed for a healthy body. The source of spiritual gifts we just saw was the Holy Spirit.

Thirdly, let’s look quickly at the power of spiritual gifts. The power of spiritual gifts, verses 2 through 6. Verse 2, “Ye know” – talking to the Corinthians – “Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto those – unto these dumb idols” – that’s “dumb” in the sense of they can’t speak – “even as you were led.” The word “led” there is like leading a prisoner.

He says to the Corinthians, “You know, you Corinthians used to be in real sad shape, going around worshiping dumb idols, praying to God’s who can’t answer.” See? Really kind of a pathetic, hopelessness in idol worship, isn’t it?

“Wherefore” – verse 3, he says, “I give you to understand” – because of your blindness and your incapacity as idol worshippers – “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” – whom? – “the Holy Spirit.”

Now, because the Corinthians had such a fouled up background in idol worship, they could know nothing about Christianity and they could know nothing spiritual gifts except the Holy

Spirit teach them. “Why,” Paul says, “you couldn’t even know something as basic as the lordship of Christ unless the Holy Spirit told you about it.”

Remember what Peter said? “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” And what did Jesus say? “Flesh and blood hath not revealed that unto you. My Father in heaven.” You can’t know that lordship of Christ apart from the Holy Spirit.

He says, “Corinthians, I don’t want you to be ignorant about spiritual gifts, but I know this: you couldn’t know about them because you couldn’t even know the basics. You couldn’t know about spiritual gifts; you couldn’t even know about step one, the lordship of Christ apart from the Holy Spirit.”

The flesh is incapable of knowing anything. If the natural man can’t even understand the lordship of Christ, how could the natural man understand the work of the Holy Spirit through spiritual gifts? He never could. Spiritual understanding and spiritual work can only be done by the power of the Spirit. Well, who is the power then of spiritual gifts? The Holy Spirit. What did Jesus say? “Ye shall receive power after the Holy Spirit is come upon you.” Who, then, is the power for understanding? Who is the power for operating spiritual gifts? The Holy Spirit. That’s thrilling. That is absolutely thrilling. I mean do you grab that? Whatever we do in our flesh is a waste. Whatever we do in our own – in our own flesh, in our own fashion, in our own will, in our own design is failure and mockery.

But – but – and get this, whatever I do when I’m filled with the Holy Spirit, whatever I do as I exercise my gift in His power is borne along by divine energy. Fantastic thought. Just to think that I can minister with divine energy, wow. So can you. In the service of the body, you can activate divine energy. Isn’t that exciting? You’re not just floating around trying to grunt and groan and build up your own strength and – you know? No. You just say, “Spirit of God, fill me,” and divine energy flows to the body as you minister.

So, in the service of the body, every member’s gift can only be exercised in the energy of the Holy Spirit if it is to be effective. If you operate in the energy of the flesh, you might as well not operate. Anything you do in the flesh is a satanic counterfeit. And, you know, that’s exactly

what was going on in Corinth. They had counterfeited all the gifts. They didn't lack any gift, but through carnality they had quenched and grieved the Holy Spirit, and no power was coming through, and the Corinthian part of the body was sick, sick, sick.

You say, "Well, I'd like to operate my gift in the energy of the Spirit. I'd really like to have the Spirit of God moving out through me. That'd be absolutely fabulous. How do I do it?"

It's real simple. Is it? Yeah. Four easy steps. There are four basic principles. How can you really operate in the energy of the Spirit? Number one, prayer, prayer, prayer, prayer. You know what prayer is? "God, I want to operate in the energy of the Spirit. God, I want to operate in the energy of the Spirit." Constantly bearing that message to God, asking Him to cleanse your life, to use you in the energy of the Spirit."

Number two, "Yield yourselves" – Romans 6 – "as instruments of" – what? – "righteousness."

"God, here's my body, myself for righteous thoughts, righteous deeds."

Third thing, Ephesians 5, "Be filled with the Spirit."

You say, "What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?" It means to allow the Spirit of God to permeate every part of you. It means to turn every decision, every thought, every attitude over to the Spirit's control.

Ah, the Spirit-filled life is fantastic. You say, "Well, that'd be great. I'm going to get down, and I'm going to pray, 'Oh, Holy Spirit, fill me.'" And when he fills you, how long does it last? It lasts just as long as the moment you asked Him. That's why the Greek says, "Be being kept filled with the Spirit." It's constantly yielding to the Holy Spirit, one thing at a time, one thing at a time.

You know what? You get in the morning, you say, "Holy Spirit, I'm Yours." Next thing you know, Satan comes along and starts tempting you. "Out of here, Satan. Holy Spirit, I'm Yours. I yield to You. Fill me. What do You want me to do? Which way do You want me to go?" Filling

of the Holy Spirit is nothing more than living conscious of the Spirit's control of your life. That's all. And turning every decision over to Him.

So, prayer, yieldedness as instruments of righteousness, filled with the Spirit. Galatians 5, the fourth one, walk in the Spirit. One step at a time. One step at a time. One step at a time. Now, we'll take messages on each of these aspects in the future and cover exactly what each of them means. But suffice it to say, at this point, that the Spirit is our energy. The guarantee that you are functioning in the *charismata*, the grace gift, and not a counterfeit is to be filled with the Spirit. That's the key.

Why, when the early Church wanted men to lead, they found men who were full of – what? – the Holy Spirit. They chose men who were full of the Holy Spirit. That's the need of every body member, folks. All we need to do is be filled with the Spirit. Let the Spirit of God have every part of our life, every dimension of our life. And we'll see that when we get to Ephesians 5 in more detail.

Verse 4 to 6. Here he explains the energy of the Spirit. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" – operating through all of them. "There are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God who works all in all."

You notice the Trinity? The Spirit, the Lord, and God. They're all working within us, but the energy is the Spirit's energy. We are on a divine power source, folks. We're plugged into the Trinity. I mean that's exciting. Can you imagine how it would be to be running around on batteries? We are plugged into divine energy. You're not just some little, insignificant, ball of flesh romping around for 60 years. You are plugged into divine power, and that power should surge through your spiritual gift to touch the body and make it healthy that its witness might be healthy.

Man, this is something beyond belief I'll tell you. We actually operate on a divine power supply. And when you minister your spiritual gift, man, the juice is really shooting through. The power is there, friend. And you know something else? The gift is there. The only thing that may not be there is yieldedness on your own part.

I'll tell you something, very honest, personally, I wouldn't want the responsibility of being the crippler of the body of Christ. No thanks. I don't think that I want to be the reason Christ's prayer for oneness isn't answered. I want to operate my gift.

So, we see the importance, the source, and the power of spiritual gifts. Very quickly I want to show you the extent of them, verse 7 to 10. The extent of spiritual gifts. And by that I mean two things: to what extent do believers have them, and how many are there and what are they? And we'll cover this very quickly.

Verse 7, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit." How many believers have the gifts? Every man. All of them. They all have them. They are vehicles given to every believer through which the Spirit manifests Himself to the body. And you notice – isn't it terrific that it says that we profit? – "given to every man to profit." But it's not only – it's not a reflexive, to profit themselves. We not only profit by the exercise of our gifts because we're being used by God, but the rest of the body profits. That's a fantastic thing.

Now, let me show you how this works. As I minister my gift to you, you profit, and you grow strong with me. And so, all the gifts work together for a total perfect man. Where you lack, I'm gifted, and I can minister to you. Where I lack, you're gifted; you can minister to me. Now watch it – by your constant ministry to me, I will be built up in my weaker areas, my non-gift areas. I may never have the gift that you have, but I'll be built up in that area because of the ministry of your gift in that area to me. And even though I have no grace gift there, that area is strengthened until I grow to maturity in all areas. And still, even though I'm mature in all areas, I'll have some special gifts that stand out.

So, you see, your ministry of gifts holds me up and builds me up. And my ministry to you builds you up. You may not have the gifts that I have, but my gifts can build you up in that area to a full, perfect man.

So, we are both strong and healthy when we minister to each other. Now, how many gifts are there? Well, there's some listed in the 12th chapter of Romans and more in the 4th chapter of Ephesians, and here's a few here, verses 8 to 10. These are the ones that are in our passage,

there's also some over there in verse 28. We're not going to study all of them tonight, but let me just read verses 8 to 10. Here's a few of them, "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom" – some people have the gift of wisdom" – "to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit" – see, there's till unity in diversity – "to another faith by the same Spirit" – that's another gift – "to another the gifts of healing by the same spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning the spirits; to another various kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."

Now, there you have a list of gifts. Now, by no means, friends, are those all the gifts; they aren't. They aren't all the gifts. And friends, if the Church is to be built up, if the power from on high is to be manifest, we've got to find our gift by prayer and yieldedness, and we've got to minister our gift to each other. Let's bow in prayer.

Our Father, we just feel like our minds have been bombarded with truth. And Lord I request Your Spirit in giving this tonight and it was of You that I have indeed spoken the oracles of God and not my own flesh. God, You know how this message has burned in my heart for these people. And Lord, I just pray right now that You'll take it and apply it to their hearts.

O God, may we minister in the energy of the Spirit. God, may we this week, by prayer and the Word of God, looking up these verses, just get down on our knees before You and seek to know our gifts and minister. Thank You, Lord, for teaching us tonight. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

Unity in Purpose (12:7)

God is not only the source of unity in spiritual gifts but also the unity of purpose in spiritual gifts. He has designed the gifts for a specific purpose—to build up the body of Christ.

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given. The word “manifestation” means “to make known, produce visible glory.” Therefore, spiritual gifts are not to be hidden. Again Paul is simply saying that each Christian has at least one spiritual gift. The Apostle Peter declared the same truth. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms (1 Pet. 4:10). A Christian may have more than one spiritual gift as seen in the Apostle Paul, who was an apostle, evangelist and a teacher. And of this gospel I was appointed a herald (evangelist) and an apostle and a teacher (2 Tim. 1:11). We now that Paul also had the gift of tongues. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you (1 Cor. 14:18). All Christians have gifts and all are valuable and important to the body of Christ generally and the local church particularly.

For the common good. Here it is stated the supreme purpose of all spiritual gifts—to build up and edify the body of Christ. Gifts are not primarily given for self-edification, for self-exaltation or to cause envy and strife among Christians. Gifts are given to the Christian to profit others. God gave spiritual gifts for the common good of the church. Each Christian is a debtor to other Christians to use his gift within the local church for the edification of other Christians. If we are not using our gifts, we are robbing our brothers and sisters of ministry.

In my opinion, the statement “for the common good” puts a great deal of pressure on those Christians who claim to speak in tongues today to use their gift responsibly so as to edify and profit the whole church. Whatever else this may teach, it says that all gifts must profit others and not be used selfishly. Perhaps tongues could be used in one’s private prayer life as some claim. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church (1 Cor. 14:4). Charismatics get around this dilemma by stating that tongues edifies

the individual Christian who grows strong so as to build the body of Christ. I don't believe this is Paul's argument here. All gifts, even tongues, must somehow profit, build up or do good for the whole body of Christ. For sure, tongues should never bring glory to self, or draw attention to self, or make a person feel more spiritual than others who do not have the gift. Whatever tongues are, they must be for the common good and build up the body of Christ collectively. Since God has gifted others to minister to Christians, every Christian can then minister to each of us. Our attitude then should be, "Every Christian, no matter how great or small, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, has a ministry to me and you personally. He gets his personal enjoyment and fulfillment in ministering to me, and I get my fulfillment and enjoyment in ministering to him."

CONCLUSION

Christian, do you know your spiritual gift? Are you seeking to discover it? Are you honestly seeking to find out how your gifts profit others? Are you serving others with your gifts through the local church? Are you doing the work of the ministry? Are you involved in the excitement and adventure of using your gifts to help others? You will never be a mature Christian until you discover your spiritual gifts and put them to work in the body of Christ. God has designed you to serve and minister to others.

We have been talking about spiritual gifts for the Christian, but the greatest gift in the world is the gift of salvation which God gives to men, women, boys and girls who receive Christ as Savior and Lord. Salvation is a gift and it is received by faith. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23). You cannot work for salvation, buy salvation or beg for salvation. You can only receive the gift of salvation by welcoming Christ into your life by faith. The moment you receive Christ you receive the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, a ticket to heaven, the person of the Holy Spirit, and you also receive at least one spiritual gift whereby you can serve Christ and His Church.

The Signs of Spiritual Immaturity—Part 2

Several years ago I was up in Montana fishing on the Bitter Root River. It is sort of a vision I have of what heaven is going to be like: beautiful mountains, the water was cold and clear. And if you have ever been in cold, clear, trout waters, you know that what looks like it may be a foot deep may be ten feet deep. It is just amazing how it can distort the view.

I had on a pair of waders that came up to my armpits. One of the things you learn when you are entering into the water—we were fly fishing—as you enter into the water, you move real slow. You don't take big strides. The bottom is going down underneath you, and there are rocks everywhere. The current is strong and you know the water gets very deep. I was able to make it across the river, and we fished most of the afternoon. We caught several trout.

It began to get dark, and I knew that to get back to where we stayed, I had to cross the river. So I started working my way to get across. At first I was very careful, slow, a small step at a time. But then I got in a hurry and I took a big step. Bad move! The current is moving fast. My foot got up under a rock. I got my foot hung up under that rock, and the current was so strong, I couldn't pull it out. And in doing so, I got turned around and I mean, I went right into the water, face first. The water was down in my waders. Oh, it was cold coming off those mountains from the spring meltdown of the snow. My fishing companions had to grab me and literally get me up on the bank so that I wouldn't be swept away or drown in that real deep water there that I was trying to cross.

I learned something. I learned to go slow when you are in deep waters. First Corinthians 12 is deep, fast moving water, if you haven't realized it by now. We are going to go slowly, a step at a time. I know some of you are saying, I wish he would hurry up! How long is it going to take? I don't know. But we are going to ease in. Someday said a long time ago, "Yard by yard, life is way too hard, but inch by inch, life is a cinch." So we are going to go inch by inch as we go through this verse. We are only looking at verse 3 and the characteristics of spiritual immaturity in the church of Corinth. Now, in 1 Corinthians, we have seen already that a person not surrendered to Christ, not willing to live up under the truth that has already been revealed to him, is called an immature believer. We don't have to go back and do that again. That is chapter 3. It must be understood, this is the situation at the church of Corinth. You will never study a church in scripture that is more

immature, upside down and distorted in their spiritual views as you will the church of Corinth.

Paul addresses their immaturity again in chapter 12. Of course, they didn't have chapters and verses. Somebody added that in. So, in the course of his letter, he comes back now and revisits their immaturity and the signs of their immaturity. In verse 1 he shows that the characteristic of spiritual immaturity is an ignorance of spiritual things, spiritual matters. In verse 2 we have the second point, the influence of a pagan past.

You might say, "I don't see how anybody could be lured into that." Are you kidding me? Let's put it in the 20th century for just a second. Have you watched television lately? How about the Psychic Hotline? Oh, you know one thing hits me when I see that commercial pop up. I think about how many Christians actually dial that number. I'll tell you who they are. They are the immature ones who can't hear from God in His Word and will not surrender to His Spirit. They have got to go someplace else to find their answers, and it is sweeping this country.

How many Christians pick up the paper and look at your horoscope? I was some place not long ago and a Christian walked up and said, "Do you know what? You are a Leo." I thought, a Leo? What is a Leo? Somebody said that was a lion. I never thought about being a Leo. Do you think that hasn't captured immature Christians in the country today? I guarantee you it has. People want fast answers. People want anything that pleases their flesh and they are moved towards that. That is what pulls people.

Paul is saying there was something about that idolatry, specifically in Corinth, that lured you passively. You didn't even realize what was happening. You were being swept right into it. And, of course, the people who went would come away just as confused, but having felt like they had gotten in touch with a pagan god. Paul reminds them of this and says "the influence of your pagan past has crept right back into the church."

Evidently some people were speaking in that same, unintelligible gibberish that had caused many of them to think that the Holy Spirit of God had actually influenced it. So, spiritual immaturity is characterized, first of all, by spiritual ignorance of spiritual matters. I mean, you know maybe one area or two areas, but you cannot highlight one or the other, you've got to see the balance. And only God

can give you that balance as you are surrendered to Him. And then, secondly, the influence of a pagan past.

Inexcusable speaking

Now we are going to look at verse 3 where it talks about the third characteristic of spiritual immaturity, and that is inexcusable speaking. Ignorance of spiritual matters; influenced by a pagan past; and inexcusable speaking. Now, if you are interested in a person's maturity level, you listen to them when they speak as if they are influenced by the Holy Spirit of God. It is amazing. It was amazing in Corinth the garbage that was being said and done in the name of God, the Holy Spirit. They were attaching the two together. We need to learn a lesson from them: that not only what we say but the way we say it has every bearing on our maturity in Christ as to whether we are surrendered to Him. It must be examined because there are guidelines that we must go by.

Now these guidelines hopefully will help you. They helped me as I was studying this. Let's just wade in carefully. Verse 3 says, "Therefore, I make known to you." "Therefore" connects it. Any time you see "therefore," always look to see what it is there for. Verse 1 and 2 tell us what it is there for. "Therefore, I make known to you, that no one [now watch the words here] speaking by the Spirit of God says, 'Jesus is accursed'; and no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit." You begin to see immediately the area that he is going to approach.

Paul changes the word for "know." He says, "Therefore, I make known to you," present tense. "I am doing it as I speak," in other words. He changes the word "know" from verse 2. The word "know" in verse 2 is *oidate*. Everybody intuitively already knows. You don't have to be taught the problems you had in your past. You know what your flesh is like and you know what dominates you, or at least tries to dominate you.

He changes the word from *oidate* to *gnorizo*. This word has a different understanding altogether. In verse 2 you already know it, why do I tell you. But in verse 3, I am going to have to tell you because you wouldn't know it any other way. It is transmitted knowledge. It is to inform somebody. It is to put something on someone's mind.

For ten years I sat under Dr. Spiros Zodhiates. I did his radio and television with him, seven hours a week for ten years. Talk about the patience of that man working with such a thick headed person as me. You talk about a man who is

intense! But you talk about a man who had to be patient to put up with me as he taught me Greek. But I would have never known any of it had it not been taught to me. It had to be transmitted from him to me. You don't know this stuff intuitively, you've got to put your head in the book and let God, the Holy Spirit, teach you and let others help you. This is what it was all about.

So Paul is saying, "Listen, you know something in verse 2, but evidently you don't know something in verse 3. I am trying to tell you something concerning spiritual matters that you don't know evidently, and therefore, I am going to have to tell you.

Now what is it about spiritual matters that he zeros out and starts attacking? That is, when somebody speaks, notice the word that is so clear there. "Therefore, I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, 'Jesus is accursed'; and no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit." There was a lot of speaking going on in Corinth in the name of the Holy Spirit of God. And the apostle Paul says, "In your immaturity, you don't seem to be able to distinguish when its under the influence of the Holy Spirit and when it is strictly nothing more than pure flesh."

When someone speaks under the influence of the Holy Spirit of God, what he says will be in an understandable language

Three things he gives to them that were just nuggets. It so blessed me when I was studying them. First of all is this, when somebody is speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit of God, what he says will be in an understandable language. In other words, there won't be some gibberish that nobody has ever heard before. When God speaks, He speaks clearly and with understanding. Let's wade in. He says, "Therefore, I make known to you, that no one speaking." The word "no one" is the word *oudeis*. It means absolutely no one in any shape, form or fashion, no one. Now, I hope I can explain the word "speaking" here. Sometimes it doesn't get out like it gets in. The word "speaking" here is the word *laleo*. That word, when you take it and put it amidst two other words, simply means to make a noise. In other words, "Therefore, I make known to you that no one making any kind of noise, whether it is intelligible or unintelligible, any kind of noise," It is very important to what we are dealing with, a gibberish even, if you please. Silence has been interrupted. Somebody has said something that broke that silence. And in this context is going to go on to deal with something that is very reasonable.

But I want you to see the meaning of *laleo*. It really simply means to make a noise. And it can be used in this context very well, but it has got to be clarified by the text. He ties this speaking, this making a noise, to the Holy Spirit's influence. "Therefore, I make known to you that anyone making any kind of noise, saying anything, by the Spirit of God," Now this puts it in another context. In other words, the noise, the sounds, the things that are said, are directly influenced and inspired by the Holy Spirit of God—no one making an utterance or noise by the Spirit of God.

The word "by" could be translated "in" and has the idea of under the control of. If a person says I am under the control of the Holy Spirit of God, whatever noise comes from me—we would say speaking—whatever noise comes out of my mouth that breaks the silence is under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Now there is no definite article before Spirit. When there is a definite article, it identifies. When there is not a definite article it qualifies. In other words, it is the full character of the Holy Spirit of God you are dealing with here. "When a person makes any kind of sound that emanates from under the influence and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, when he says any words that breaks the silence."

Then he goes on and says, "Therefore, I make known to you, that no on speaking by the Spirit of God says." Now the word "says" that he uses there is the word *lego*. He completely changes the word. This is very significant. How many times do we read this stuff and go right on as if it means nothing? The word *lego* comes from the word *logos*.

Now, when you put up three words for "say" or "speak," *rema*, subjective word, *lego*, or *logos*, and then you put up the word over here *laleo*, they all have a different meaning. When you put them all together, it makes a beautiful truth. The word *lego*, or *logos*, that is used here, the verb, means intelligent, understandable words. You see, anybody making a sound under the influence of the Holy Spirit of God, will say that which is understandable and intelligent. There will be no gibberish in it. Everyone will hear in a language they can understand. Now, that may not mean they understand everything that is said, because the prophets would speak in a language everybody heard, but nobody fully grasped the depths of those things. When the Holy Spirit of God speaks and someone is making a sound that is influenced and inspired by the Holy Spirit, when he says (*lego*)

something, it will be intelligent, it will be understandable, it will be full of integrity because it is coming from the Holy Spirit of God.

Now that immediately begins to make your ears perk up as to what is going on in Corinth. No man speaking under the leadership of the Holy Spirit can speak in some gibberish and call that the Holy Spirit. It will be a language that is understandable. God speaks so that His people can understand what He is saying. He does not speak in gibberish. As a matter of fact, the word *logos* is the word that is used of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the living *logos*. God wanted man to understand God Himself, so He sent His only Son that through Jesus we could understand He is the Father. He came to reveal the lamb nature of God. So many things we know of the Father through looking at Jesus. He was very understandable. He never once spoke in a language that people could not hear and understand. They may not have understood what He said, but they understood the words that came from Him, because it is was in a language that communicated with them.

In fact, if you will turn back with me to [Luke 3:22](#), God the Father speaks out of heaven, identifying who His Son is. I want you to know that God the Father did not use a language that nobody could understand. He spoke in a way that people could have use of communication and to understand it.

As a matter of fact, there are many verses. I just chose two of them because I am going somewhere with this. We could spend a lot longer time on this if I took all the verses, but you check it out. Hey, dig in, check it out to see if it is so, every time God spoke. Verse 22 says, “And the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, ‘Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased.’” A voice came out of heaven, not in some language that nobody could understand, in a very clear language, whatever that was.

On the Day of Pentecost, what was the key? It wasn’t the speaking, it was the hearing. Everyone heard what was said in their own language. Look at [Luke 9:35](#), “And a voice came out of the cloud saying, ‘This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!’” How are you going to listen to anybody if you can’t understand what they are saying? God chooses to speak in a language that people can understand, whatever that may be. If you have a Romanian Bible, He will speak to you in Romanian. If you have an English Bible, He will speak to you in English. He speaks so that man can understand. So, when somebody speaks and he says that he is

under the influence of the Holy Spirit of God, the noise that he makes will be that with intelligence, integrity and understanding. That is the first thing and the first rule of being able to decide. A lot of people are speaking, where is the Holy Spirit in all this? That is the first one he brings up. It is a very subtle one.

When someone speaks under the influence of the Holy Spirit of God, truth will always be presented

But then secondly, when the Holy Spirit is influencing someone to speak, truth will always be presented. Truth will always be presented. Not only were there those in Corinth who were speaking in a gibberish which came out of their very pagan past, but there were other parts of their pagan past and idolatry. There were those who discredited the deity of Christ. In fact, there were those who would speak and you could understand them. The problem is, what they were saying completely nullified scripture.

Look at what he says, “Therefore, I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says [there are no intelligent words that can come influenced by the Spirit of God which says], ‘Jesus is accursed.’” The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is no way going to inspire anybody to say Jesus is accursed.

Obviously, any saved person or unsaved person in a fit of anger could say those words. I know there are times in my life and your life we say a lot of things, but it is not under the influence of the Holy Spirit of God. He qualifies—and make sure you understand—when somebody tags what they say to the leadership and influence of the Holy Spirit of God, you will never hear an unbiblical truth. Truth will always be presented.

What is here is a very heinous thing. They said Jesus is accursed. And probably in a fit of emotion of ecstasy, somebody might have got up and spoke in a language nobody had ever heard before. Not only that, somebody else gets up and says Jesus is accursed. Well, are they of the Holy Spirit of God?

The word “accursed” is an interesting word, and if you will look into it, it helps you better understand what is being said. The word “accursed” is the word *anathema*. It is an interesting word. In this context it means something that is given over to the curse in order to be destroyed. In other words, a person without Christ is *anathema*. He is given over to the curse that will one day be destroyed, in a sense that he is set apart from God forever. There is no relationship that can ever be there.

Well, what they are doing here, evidently in Corinth there were those who were taking the deity of who Christ is, the truth of what the Word presents, and they lowered it to where Jesus is just a human being. Now, who are these people? I don't know who these people are. We can make some educated guesses. Maybe the ones doing the gibberish were the pagans who got in among the service and were trying to make the Christians think that this was really of the Spirit. Maybe, I don't know. Maybe they are Christians themselves. Maybe there were others who were Jews. There were some Jews in Corinth, and the Jews were adamantly against the deity of Christ. So they came in and said He is accursed. He is like the rest of us. He is going to be destroyed under the curse. He is not God. They lowered Him down to a humanistic level. No man can do that and claim that he is under the leadership of the Holy Spirit of God.

You think the deity of Christ is not important? It is being attacked more than you realize it in subtle ways in our country today. People get up, well respected people, under the name of the Holy Spirit of God, actually by what they say, completely undermine the very deity of Christ. And Christians just sit there and say, "Isn't he wonderful," with no discernment at all.

Paul is saying that is the same thing that was going on in Corinth. They didn't know the difference. A man could get up and say Jesus is accursed. Perhaps he didn't say it in those same words. Maybe he got up and presented the fact that He is just mere man. You know, we talk about the Godman, maybe they presented so much of the humanness of Christ that they forgot the deity of Christ. And if you don't have that balance, don't speak until you are taught, because you are going to undermine the very deity of Christ. And when you undermine the deity of Christ, everything else unravels. So there are two things right here: when the Holy Spirit of God speaks, He speaks so that you can understand and so that His people can understand. God is not in the business of putting His will in some coded language. When the Spirit of God speaks, the truth is presented and the truth is centered around Christ. It is the essence of who God is and it is centered right in His Word. Scripture will come forth when the Spirit has anything to do with it. I want to tell you something, folks, our flesh will chase an experience if you give it half a chance. It will chase an emotion, it will chase a great whim that is going on in this day and say it is of the Holy Spirit of God.

When someone speaks under the influence of the Holy Spirit of God, Christ will always be revealed

Well, first of all, He will speak so that you might understand; He will speak so that you may understand. Secondly, He will honor the Word of God; the Word of God in truth will be presented. But then thirdly, Christ will always be revealed. When the Spirit of God is influencing, a noise, a word is coming out of somebody's mouth, it is going to end up somehow in revealing Christ.

Look in the last part of verse 3, "And no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit." Now hang on a minute, hang on a minute. You've got to ease back. First of all, "no one can say." Paul uses the same word which means absolutely nobody can say. The word *lego*, coming right out of *logos*, is used. Nobody can say with an intelligent thought and understanding and integrity that Jesus is Lord unless the Spirit of God influences him, because that is the kind of stuff that comes from the Spirit of God. He reveals who the Lord Jesus really is, that Jesus is Lord. You think that is not important? I was doing a meeting down in Mississippi years ago I preached one day on the fact that Jesus is the only well you ever need to drink from, the only well. You don't need anything outside of Jesus. I finished, and I remember a man came up. He said, "I want to tell you something, Preacher, you have offended me and you have offended the third person of the Holy Spirit of God." Well, I was concerned about offending the third person of the Trinity, of the godhead. I said, "How did I offend the third person of the Trinity?" He said, "You never mentioned the name of the Holy Spirit one time. You only talked about Christ." I was able to say to him something and pointed him to scripture.

I want to point you to it. I want you to turn to [John 16:13-14](#). I want you to see it for yourself. I didn't write it. You know, it is amazing to me how many people are trying to defend the personalities of the Trinity when there is no jealousy in the Trinity. The Father gives it to the Son, the Son gives it to the Spirit, the Spirit gives it back to Jesus, Jesus gives it back to the Father. They don't have a problem with it. The problem is down here on earth with fleshly, immature Christians running around trying to defend the third person of the Trinity! Don't defend Him, just bow to Him. And when you do, He will reveal Christ to you, and truth will be presented and He will do it in an understandable way.

[John 16:13](#) says, "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes [that's Him, the Holy Spirit], He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own

initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify Me [Jesus]" Do you know what "glorify" means? Give recognition to. Do you think the Holy Spirit of God came to this earth to give recognition to Himself?

But what is happening all over our country, folks, people are giving recognition to the Holy Spirit of God. And I want to tell you something that in no way demeans who He is. I bow before Him every day of my life. But He is the Spirit of Christ, He is God, He is absolutely, utterly God. There are three persons to the godhead, but only one God. You say, "I don't understand that." Well, if you did, then God would be no bigger than your brain, so don't beat yourself up. You don't understand that, you bow before it, the Holy Spirit of God.

I told that man, "I did not in any way contradict the Holy Spirit of God. I didn't offend Him. As a matter of fact, I complimented Him." He said, "What do you mean?" I read those verses and said, "The Holy Spirit of God didn't come to present Himself. He came to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ." What is wrong with us, folks? Immature people build themselves around things that are emotional and they focus on only one or two aspects of what the whole is all about. And look out if they don't present Him as Christ. Only the Holy Spirit can do that.

As a matter of fact, Paul says no one can claim intelligently, no one can say—and he uses the aorist tense—even once, that Jesus is Lord. Oh, do you know what he is doing? He is pointing back to their salvation. He says, "Do you remember when you got saved? You didn't open your mouth and say that Jesus is Lord by the rationalization of your mind. You didn't come up with that in your mind. The Spirit of God revealed that to you, and that is where salvation begins."

That is why it says in Romans that people couldn't come to know God. He was all around them but they couldn't come to understand anything. The whole problem is, He has to be revealed to the human heart. Any speaker who ever stands up and says he is in the power of the Holy Spirit of God knows one thing, he knows there are a ton of things he can't do. He can't make things understandable. The Holy Spirit of God can. He can't do certain things. He can lift up. He can speak in a language everybody can understand. He can present truth, but only the Spirit of God can glorify Christ and reveal Christ. And that is what will happen when somebody does this. No one can say even once that Jesus is Lord.

Verse 14 of chapter 2 says a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God. He does not accept them. And in verse 10 of chapter 2, he says, “To us God revealed them through the Spirit for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.” So no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Spirit of God.

Now, who are these people who would come in and bypass the Holy Spirit to talk about Christ or to talk about other things? Maybe it ties back to that other group of people we are talking about. I know one of the areas that Gnosticism targeted was the area of Greece and particularly Corinth. We know that Colossians was written to combat Gnosticism and Colossae was there in Greece. So what is going on here? —Actually, Colossae was more over in the Turkey area—But what is going on here? Gnosticism.

Do you know who the Gnostics were? They were the people who bypassed the Word, the Holy Spirit, and came into everything through a mystical knowledge that you could have, that you didn’t need any other revelation. Maybe they were the ones. I just don’t know. But something was going on, and what Paul had to say to them was, “You can’t even say that Jesus is Lord except by the Spirit of God.”

Well, there were some people in Corinth speaking in gibberish that nobody could understand, directly tied to their pagan past. There were some who were there who were denouncing the deity of Christ, directly tied to their pagan past, and maybe still pagan. Some of them were doing that. There were some who were trying to rationalize Christ and the message and didn’t realize that only the Holy Spirit could reveal Him and could make Him fully understandable. The apostle Paul says you are so upside down, you won’t know the difference.

When somebody speaks under the influence of the Holy Spirit, he speaks in a language that is understandable because he intends to communicate something to you. But not only that, when he speaks, he will speak in a message that is truthful and he will present scripture correctly. But not only that, when He causes someone to speak, Christ in the midst of it will be revealed.

There are three things that qualify a person as immature spiritually. First of all, is an ignorance of spiritual matters; secondly, is an influence of a pagan past; and thirdly, inexcusable speaking. All I can say to you is be real careful that you don’t make an experience the basis of what you think the truth has to say. The flesh is so powerful. If you ever have an experience, perhaps it is in gibberish or whatever else and you don’t understand it, be very careful. Experience never backs up truth.

Truth must always back up experience. And if whatever experience we have does not fit exactly into what truth says, then evidently that experience needs to be questioned, not the Word of God.

We are walking through it carefully. We are dealing with a church that is so immature they didn't know enough to get in out of the rain spiritually. They didn't know the difference when somebody spoke under the influence of the Holy Spirit, how to watch for the marks and the pillars that give us a clear understanding that yes, this person is under the influence of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is all I can tell you.

God speaks clearly. Scripture and truth is upheld and Jesus is revealed whenever He speaks. Always remember that.

DIFFERENT AND THE SAME

1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-11

When you trusted in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, believing the work that He accomplished on the cross and accepting His perfect sacrifice on your behalf, you received a new identity. You have become a new person. You are not the old person you used to be. You have a new identity. This new identity is rooted in the person of Jesus Christ.

Because He is the Son of God, you are also a child of God. Because He has eternal life, you also have eternal life. Because He is righteous, you have also been declared to be righteous. Because He was crucified, you are considered to have been crucified with Christ in the eyes of the law. Because He rose from the dead, you will also rise from the dead and are even today considered to be risen with Christ. Because He is the Heir to the kingdom, you are also a co-heir with Christ.

That is not all. Christ has also given you a spiritual gift. This is a special supernatural ability that is designed for service to the Lord.

Most Christians today believe that spiritual gifts exist, but do not act as though they exist. We do not usually act as though God has equipped us with something special. If anything, we tend to act as though we were completely unequipped for any kind of service.

Paul sets out to teach the Christians at Corinth about spiritual gifts. He does this, not as an end in itself, but to show how there is to be unity within the church, even when we are gifted in different sorts of ways.

What You Were	What You Are
Pagans ("nations")	Believers
Led astray to dumb idols	Brought to Jesus
You used to say, "Jesus is accursed."	Now you say, "Jesus is Lord."

THE PRINCIPLE OF VARIETY

7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. (1 Corinthians 12:7-11).

We usually think of this passage as one that describes some of the spiritual gifts. After all, nice specific gifts are listed. I've read countless books that cite this passage and then go on to do a thorough study of each of the gifts that are listed. One can even take a test that will tell you in which of these areas you might be gifted. While there can certainly be some value in such exercises, we ought to note that this passage does not describe these gifts at all. It does not tell us any identifying features of any of the gifts that are listed. It isn't meant to.

Don't miss this! Paul's purpose is not to tell us all there is to know about spiritual gifts. His purpose is to tell us that there is variety within the unity of God's people.

I think there is a reason for this. If Paul had given us a detailed description of these various gifts, then we would tend to be very restrictive in their manifestation. We might come up with a regulative principle of spiritual gifts that said we can only use the gifts in the way in which the Bible specifically tells us we can use them.

For example, let us imagine that Paul had related a vivid description of the gift of wisdom. We would then have a tendency to take anyone who did not match up to our expectation of that description and say to that person, "If you want to exercise the gift of wisdom, then you have to look like this and talk like that and dress a certain way and move your hands in a certain way."

Instead, he makes the point that the gifts are manifested in many different ways. I happen to have a gift for teaching. But I have met others who also have a gift of teaching who are completely different than me and who utilize a completely different style in teaching. The manifestation of that gift in their lives and ministries are completely different from the way that gift has been manifested in my life. Is that bad? No, that is good because God has made us to be different.

1. Variety is Given by the Spirit: *But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit (12:7).*

Here is one definition of a spiritual gift. A spiritual gift is a manifestation of the Spirit. When you see a spiritual gift in action, you are seeing the Holy Spirit at work.

The Holy Spirit is invisible. You cannot see Him. You can only see where He is at work. Jesus likened the Holy Spirit to the wind. You can see the effects of the wind. You can see leaves and clouds and sand being blown along. You can see flags flapping and you can see tree branches bending, but you are not actually seeing the wind. You are only seeing the effects of the wind.

By the same token, when you see someone using a spiritual gift in a spiritual manner, you are seeing the physical effects of the working of the Holy Spirit.

2. Variety is Given for the Common Good: *But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good (12:7).*

The word "for" introduces a purpose clause. Here is the reason that spiritual gifts are given. This is the purpose for spiritual gifts. They are for the common good. They are for the good of those who are a part of the body of Christ.

This means that the way you use your spiritual gift is very important to me. Your spiritual gift has been given to you for my benefit and my spiritual gift has been given to me for your benefit.

To use a spiritual gift for your own benefit and for your own self-interest is contrary to the very purpose and nature of spiritual gifts. They are not designed to be pointed inward. They are designed to be directed outward. They are designed to benefit others.

I personally believe that a lot of the confusion that is evidenced in the modern Charismatic and Pentecostal community could be cleared up by an understanding of this basic purpose of spiritual gifts.

This brings us to a principle. It is that Christianity is a team effort. Have you ever watched a football team? I am not a sports fan, but I have watched a few games in my time and I have observed the various members of a football team are different. Not everyone is a quarterback. If everyone tried to be exactly like the quarterback, the entire team would lose. Neither are they all tackles. You can't win a football game if everyone on the team is a tackle.

Everyone on the team has his own position and each position is important. If the left guard suddenly decides that he is going to take a nap, how is the rest of the team going to function? They will all lose because of the lack of one of the members.

The same is true within the church. When one of the members is letting a spiritual gift lie dormant, the entire body is going to suffer.

3. Variety is Given in the ways in which the Gifts are Described: *For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same*

Spirit; 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues (12:8-10).

There are nine gifts mentioned here. They are all different. Some of these are dramatic and some are quiet. I believe that some of them may have been present only in the days of the early church and some are still with us today.

What is interesting is that there are several other places in the New Testament where spiritual gifts are listed and those lists are different from the list that is found here. To be sure, there are some overlaps, but there is no passage to which we can turn that gives an exhaustive list of all of the spiritual gifts.

From that observation, I believe that we can deduce that all such lists in the New Testament are merely representative. Each is only a partial listing of the spiritual gifts and even if we took all of the lists and combined them, we would still have only a partial listing of the different ways in which God has gifted His church.

4. *Variety is Given according to God's Will: But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills*

The spiritual gifts are given according to the will of God, not according to your will or my will. That means you cannot choose which spiritual gift you will have. You cannot say, "I'll have one of those and one of these and a little bit of that one over there." You don't get to decide which spiritual gift you have. That is God's decision and He distributes them as He wills.

God has made each of us differently. No two believers are totally alike. That does not mean we cannot have unity. Even though God has given many different types of gifts, we are the same because our gifts have come from the same source and for the same purpose. Even though we are different, we are one.