

# NOTES ON FIRST CORINTHIANS

Dennis F. Robinson, DMin

Exploring Paul's First  
Epistle to the  
Corinthians with  
Particular Emphasis  
on Chapters 12-14





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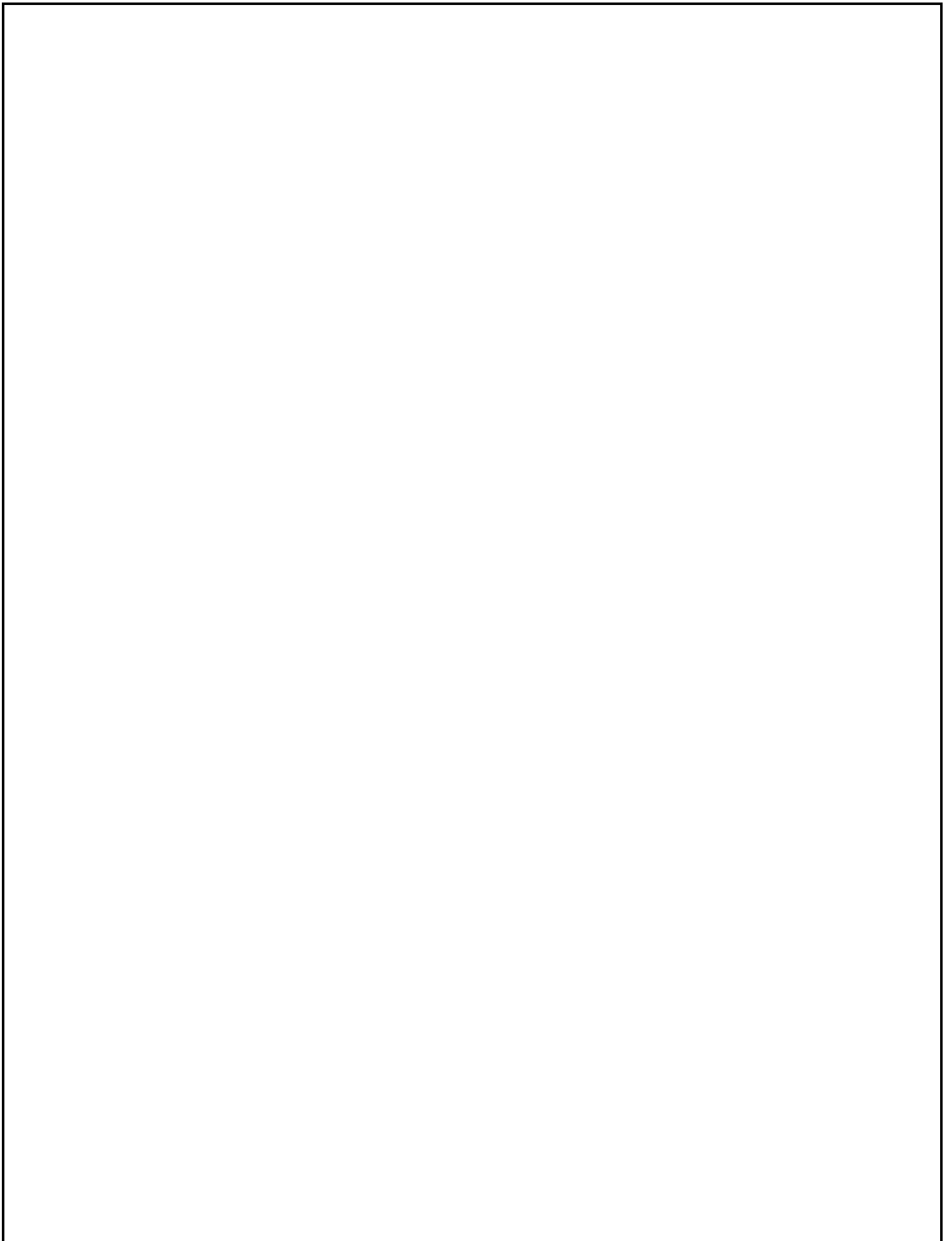
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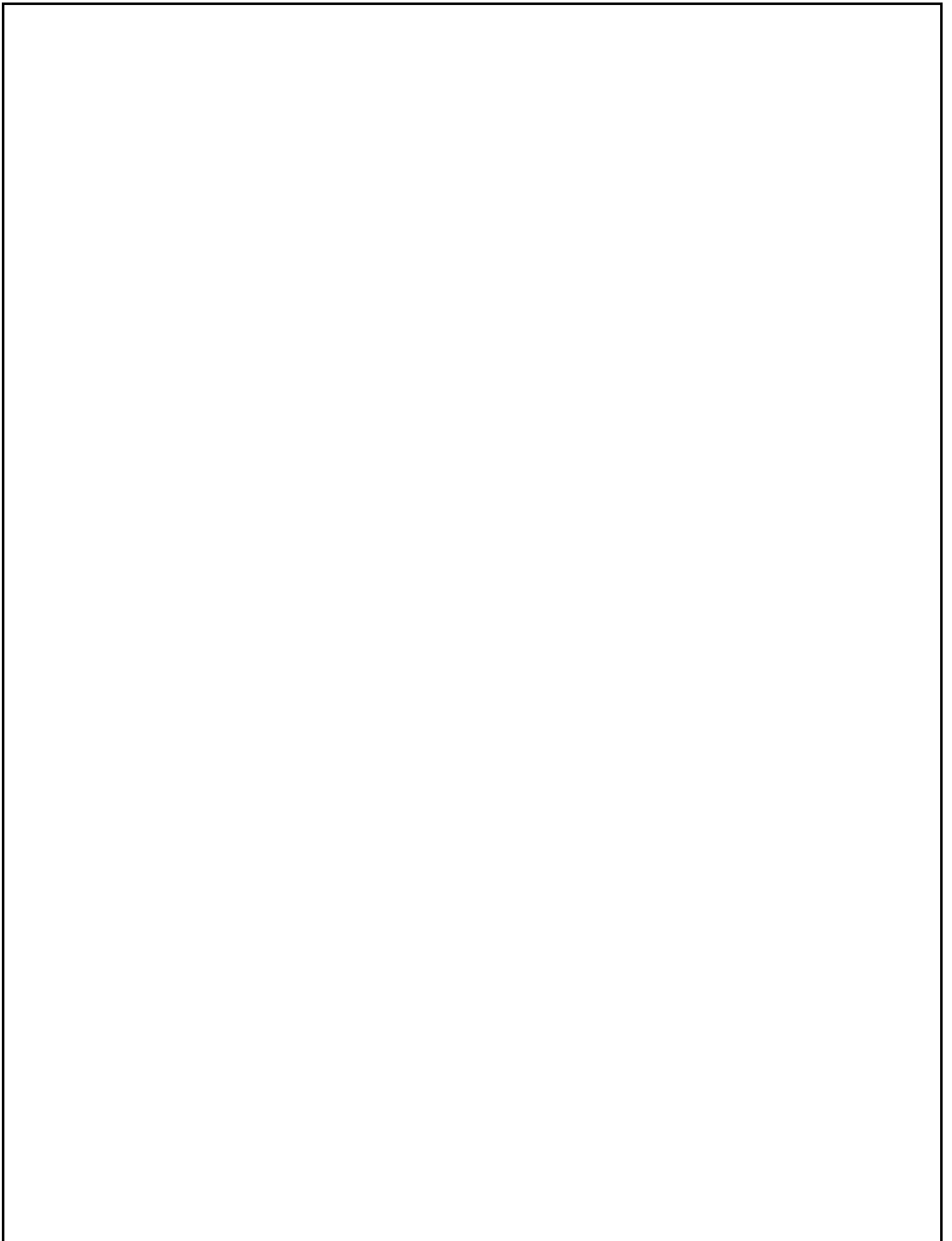
Exploring Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians with Particular  
Emphasis on Chapters 12-14

DENNIS F. ROBINSON, DMIN



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Most of the material in this writing comes from experience, added from study, preaching, and teaching, combined with formal training. None of it would be possible without superiors who provided influences that have shaped my character and learning. It is my desire to complement and express gratitude to all who have crossed my pathway, providing those influences. So, it is with great sincerity and humility of mind that the writer acknowledges all of those teachers, writers, individuals who have added to his understanding of Biblical study and doctrine. Many of these teachers were trained professors in Bible college and seminary. My heart is filled with gratitude for all of those professors and teachers at Lee University, Pentecostal Theological Seminary, and Oral Roberts University, who were instrumental in forming my educational experience. In addition, much practical understanding came from mentors in the pastorate. My first pastor, Rev. Jimmie Wright, who influenced me tremendously for the first six months of my salvation experience, was used by the Lord to seek out and find this poor lost sinner and compel him to revival services where he was converted. Afterwards, Rev. John Weber, who became my pastor immediately after Pastor Wright, provided much practical knowledge in his sermons and private encounters. Pastor Weber was one of the most practical, Spirit-led ministers that I have ever known. His sermons stuck in my heart and helped tremendously in my spiritual formation. Many others, including Rev. E.J. Reynolds, my first district overseer after college graduation, also impacted my life. His concern for me, the ministry, and Spirit-anointed biblical preaching were influential in my development. Most importantly, the presence and power of the Holy Spirit that has been given to the Body of Christ, and especially to this simple minister of the Gospel of Christ, has impacted my life beyond measure, and beyond my ability to describe. All praise, honor, and glory be to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. And may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, use the comments in this work to bring usefulness to the Church, which is Christ's Body, Amen.





## FORMAL INTRODUCTION

Knowledge can be attained by a diversity of avenues in today's highly informative world. Books, teachers, computers and practical experience are primary. One who has no prior knowledge of the subject can be taught how to fly an airplane by studying books, manuals, and with the use of computer programs. Another can be taught how to cook by following cooking guidelines, recipes, and instructional videos. However, it is one thing to gain the mental awareness, yet, quite another experience when practical application is attempted. Summarily, having Bible knowledge is not the same as having that same knowledge with experience. Sinners converted by the grace of God can testify of their experience. Unconverted sinners will never understand the testimony of the saved until they are converted themselves because experience is lacking. For the same reason, Spirit-filled believers know of the experience of Holy Spirit anointings of which they speak. Believers who have never received Spirit baptism will never understand or perceive the testimony of the Spirit-filled believer.

A story was told of how a learned communicator was able to recite the Twenty-Third Psalm. His delivery was without error, explicit, passionate, and the audience excitedly applauded his recitation. An older Christian minister was asked to quote the same Psalm. When he finished, there was not a dry eye in the audience. His delivery was powerful, moving, anointed, compassionate. Someone asked, "what was the difference?" What made the audience respond so emotionally to the older preacher's performance? The answer was: the learned communicator knew the Twenty-Third Psalm. The aged minister knew the Author of the Twenty-Third Psalm.

A book written by Philip Keller, [A Shepherd Looks at the Twenty-Third Psalm](#), looks at the life of a modern-day shepherd and his interaction with the sheep. In the text Keller describes his experience with sheep and uncovers many situations that assist the reader in gaining an understanding of the much-loved Psalm. Even though the reader has opportunity to gain interesting insight into

the life of the sheep and the shepherd, much is still missing. For instance, the reader cannot experience the sights of the green pasture, the smell of the sheep, the constant bleating, and all of the other sensual oddities that attend shepherding sheep. That is, of course, unless the reader has been in the same position as the shepherd and experienced the same situations. Reading of Keller's experience will bring much of what is contained in Psalm Twenty-Three to a new understanding of this beloved Psalm, but reading alone cannot bring the same understanding to the reader as that gained by Keller himself.

And, so it is with manifestations and gifts of the Spirit found in Corinthians. Those who have the experience, those who know and have been so gifted, have an understanding unavailable to those who do not possess the same experience. In this writer's opinion the entire Church world was intended by the Godhead to be Pentecostal. Everything Jesus and the apostles taught, everything written in Scripture leads to this determination. However, the Church falls short in many areas, which can be readily attested by history. Jesus' plan was for the Church to expand from Jerusalem, to Judaea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth. It took persecution from the beginning to prompt believers to action, spreading them throughout the known world. Christian doctrine began to take a foothold and many of its teachings became a part of the formulation of creeds, determined by church councils in the second, third and later centuries. Early Church Fathers wrote of Pentecostal doctrinal distinctives which have at times flourished and at other times declined. It was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that these doctrines came to the fore-front again in Christendom, although they were all the while present in the Christian Church throughout the ages, since the birth of the Church. (See the Pentecostal experience recognized throughout the history of the Church by clicking on this link: <http://www.truthforthelastdays.com/baptismandgifts/baptismandgifts35.html> )

Non-Pentecostals usually believe that the gifts of the Spirit ended with the death of the apostles, a doctrine that cannot be proven by rightly dividing the Word of Truth in conjunction with serious study of Church history through the centuries. In the present era Pentecostals and the new breed of Spirit-filled believers, the Charismatics, believe in the giftings of the Spirit, their necessity for the Church today, but differ as to operation and qualification. To the entire Church the writings of Paul in First Corinthians are of

utmost importance. Even so, there are differences of opinion and various schools of interpretation concerning Paul's writings in this particular letter to the Church. This document is not offered in an attempt to divide the Church further, only to provide a study of what the writer perceives to be the intention of scripture. Believers who are saved, have the assurance that they have been born again, as far as this writer is concerned belong to Christ. However, Christ provided much more for His Church than just the born-again experience. Perhaps this idea will become more understandable as the reader proceeds.

This writer does not claim to be an expert in the interpretation of the Corinthian letters, only a serious student, but does feel that he has somewhat to offer the Church, stemming from college, seminary, and personal study. Since he has almost fifty years of experience living in the Pentecostal environment, preaching, teaching, and studying the Word of God, he has felt for some time a need to provide a document of his thoughts and understandings concerning the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Church as the Apostle Paul describes. Most Pentecostals should readily comprehend the writer's concepts. Non-Pentecostal readers may find difficulty. However, this work is offered in hopes that a renewal of true Spiritual worship would return to the Church and that the Church would truly operate as God intended, living in the power and demonstration of spiritual giftings and function.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL

As a matter of introduction, Acts, 18:1-18 tells the story of Paul's missionary journey that brought him to Corinth and his ministry among them. According to the last part of Acts Chapter seventeen, Paul is preaching at the Areopagus in Athens. His visit ended with mixed emotion, "When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We, will hear thee again of this matter," (Acts 17:32-34). When Paul departed from among them certain personalities attached themselves unto Paul, and believed. Two, that are mentioned are Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris. And of course, there were others, not mentioned by name.

Chapter eighteen opens with Paul departing from Athens and arriving in Corinth, where he, "found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla." A parenthetical statement is found in verse two which explains that Priscilla and Aquila had come from Italy because "Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome." Since Paul and Aquila made small portable tents from leather, cloths spun from goat's hair, or linen, which were beneficial to travelers, they lived and worked together. It seems evident that Paul used this method of support to work and provide for his own needs for there are at least two other occasions mentioned in scripture where the apostle provided for his own means. One reference is in Acts 20:34 where Paul was in Ephesus. The other reference describes Paul's work in Thessalonica and is found in 2 Thess. 3:9-10.

At Corinth, Paul reasoned every sabbath in the synagogue and persuaded Jews and Greeks. When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, burdened in the spirit, or "borne away by an unusual impulse," (Barnes, e-Sword), which prompted him to testify to the Jews that Jesus was Messiah. This declaration was opposed by the Jews, to the extent that they uttered blasphemous words, against Paul and the gospel he preached. Their reproach and vilification of Jesus of Nazareth, speaking of Him with contempt is blasphemy, (Luke 22:65).

After their blasphemous assault, Paul shook his raiment, and said unto them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles," (Acts 18:6). Paul then departed and entered into the house of a man named Justus, who worshipped God and whose house was near the synagogue. Scripture tells us that Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, "believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized," (Acts 18:8). At this time the Lord spoke to Paul in a night vision saying, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city," (Acts 18:9-10).

Paul continued at the house of Justus for a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. Notwithstanding, the Jews continued to persecute Paul, for when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, charging him for worshipping God contrary to the law.

Just as Paul was about to open his mouth in self-defense, Gallio intervened saying unto the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters," (Acts 18:14-15). Gallio, disinterested in the behavior of the Jews then drove them from the judgment seat.

After the expulsion of the Jews, all the Greeks, having been enraged by the behavior of the Jews, took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and "beat him before the judgment seat," (Acts 18:17). Assuming this is the same synagogue which was referenced when Crispus was the ruler, we note that in the process of time and circumstance, Crispus had lost his standing as ruler of the synagogue when he joined himself to Christ, and Sosthenes had been assigned to fulfill that role.

After all of this commotion, Paul tarried there yet a good while, probably about six months. Then, taking leave of the brethren, sailed into Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Paul's Contacts and Letters**

Paul's communication with the Corinthians after leaving their company and going on to other pursuits is complicated. He wrote letters, he received letters, others provided instruction to the Corinthians from Paul, and Paul threatens to come to them. Unless and except these communications are pointed out, most readers will simply read through Corinthians and will not grasp the involvement the apostle had with this congregation. Our data covers both letters, First and Second Corinthians. In order to point out some of Paul's interactions and contacts with the Corinthians, a representative designation is developed as shown below to reveal the origination of the action.

#### **Elements Under Consideration**

Was this communication an answer (A)? 1 Cor 15:12

Titus visited Corinth on his own accord, or independent visit? (IV)  
1 Cor 8:16-17

The communication was a letter (L). 1 Cor 5:9, 5:11, 2 Cor 1:13;  
7:8; 9:1 [either wrote or mentioned]

Could it have been a letter or some other form of communication (L?)? 1 Cor 16:1; 2 Cor 2:9

LR represents letters Paul received from the Corinthians. 1 Cor  
7:1, 8:1

Was an open door the reason for Paul's visit (OD)? 1 Cor 16:9; 2  
Cor 2:12;

This is a plea from Paul. (PP) 2 Cor 10:1

Paul sent a single individual (PSI) 1 Cor 4:17, 16:10; 2 Cor  
8:18-24;

Is it pertaining to more than one person sent by Paul to secure an  
answer: "sent the brethren" (PSTB)? 2 Cor 9:3, 9:5

Does this reference pertain to Paul's teaching while among them (PT)? 11:2, 15:2

Finally, Paul threatens to come to Corinth (PTTC) 2 Cor 2:14 either by letter or in person, this he says this is the third time I am coming to you (PTTC3). 2 Cor 13:1

Was the communication a question (Q)? 12:1

Is the situation described, a report (R)? 1:11, 5:1, and 11:17

Is it a possible report (R)? 16:17

Is this statement in reference to Paul's visit or plan to visit (V)? 16:5; 2 Cor 1:15 and 2:1

Criteria as it appears in First and Second Corinthians:

### **Items Appearing in First Corinthians**

(R) Paul contacted by Chloe - 1:11

(PSI) Paul sent Timothy 4:17 to bring them into remembrance of Paul's ways in Christ -- which he taught in every church.

(R) Another report -- of fornication -- incest 5:1

(L) Paul wrote unto the Corinthians in an epistle not to company with fornicators: 5:9

(L) Now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; 5:11

(LR) Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: 7:1

(LR) Now, as touching things offered unto idols 8:1 (which probably came with things written unto him as in 7:1)

(PT) Now, I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you 11:2

(R) Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; 11:17 -- someone reported this to him

(Q?) Now, concerning spiritual gifts brethren, I would not have you ignorant. 12:1 -- undoubtedly Paul was questioned concerning spirituals

(PT) For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures 15:2 -- appears to be communication from Paul -- may be when he was first among them preaching and teaching

(A) Now, if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? 15:12 - appears to be an answer to what some were "saying." Or a rebuke to what some were "saying."

(L?) Concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 16:1 - May or may not be answer to question concerning the collection -- may be a commandment added to this particular writing.

(V) Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: 16:5 -- He will come and check on them --

(OD) For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are* many adversaries. 16:9,

(PSI) Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: 16:10 - he is going to send Timothy to check on them

(R?) I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied -- 16:17 - they may have brought reports to Paul.

### **Items Appearing in Second Corinthians**

(L) For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end; 1:13

(V) And in this confidence, I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; and to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea. 1:15-16

(V) But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness. 2:1



(L?) For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. 2:9

(OD) Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord 2:12 -- did this have anything to do with Paul's Corinthian visit?

(L) For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. 7:8 -- the letter that made them sorry (IV) But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you -- 8:16-17

(PSI) And we have sent with him (that is with Titus) the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches; And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind: Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you. Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow helper concerning you: or our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ. Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf. 8:18-24 -- looks like Titus, and another brother, or more than one brother was sent

(L) For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: 9:1

(PSTB) Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready 9:3

(PSTB) Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness. 9:5

(PP) Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you: 10:1

(PTTC) Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. 12:14 **THIRD TIME** – I am ready – to come.

(PTTC3) This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. 13:1 **THIRD TIME** – I am coming to you.

## CHAPTER THREE

### INTRODUCTION TO COMMENTS

First Corinthians is a letter written by the apostle Paul, to the church at Corinth with the purpose of answering questions posed, to deal with irregularities reported by various individuals, and to correct various practical/doctrinal irregularities. There were at least two letters from Paul (2 Corinthians), and most probably three. Of the third, we have no record, but mention is made in 2 Corinthians 2:9, 7:8, 9:1, of Paul's writing, which leads us to believe there were at least three letters and probably more. In any study of epistles or books of scripture, it is important to note authorship. Most scholars will readily agree that Paul is the author of this first letter to the Corinthians, mainly because the scripture text itself proclaims Paul as author. (1 Cor 1:1-2). Of course, the recipients of this epistle are the Christians in the congregation at Corinth. Included in the extent of Paul's admonitions are "to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." Paul's directing the epistle to "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord" reaches even to Christians in the twenty-first century, making the epistle pertinent to the Church of today.

In Acts chapter 18:1-18, the story of Paul's missionary journey, which includes the planting and development of the Church at Corinth, is recorded. Early contact with the Corinthians and planting a church there is noted by Albert Barnes, "The apostle Paul first visited Corinth about 52 A.D. He was then on his way from Macedonia to Jerusalem. He had passed some time at Athens, where he had preached the gospel, but not with such success as to warrant him to remain, or to organize a church." Alone at Athens, Paul expected to be joined by Silas and Timothy, but he was disappointed, according to Acts 17:15 and 18:5.

Arriving in Corinth alone, Paul "found Aquila and Priscilla there, who had lately come from Rome." He waited the coming of Silas and Timothy and after their arrival, entered on the great work of preaching the gospel. His discouragements were met by a precious and specific promise of the Lord signifying that he would be with

him, and would not leave him. God had a purpose to gather together a church in that city and was intent on doing so with the apostle's help. In Corinth, Paul stationed himself for eighteen months (Acts 18:11), preaching without hesitation, until he was opposed by the Jews, Sosthenes being their leader, and brought before Gallio, being charged with insurrection. Gallio refused to hear the case. Scripture here tells us that he remained there yet "a good while" Acts 18:18, and then sailed into Syria." (Barnes, e-Sword)

From Albert Barnes' notes at the e-Sword entry for these verses, concerning the city of Corinth, we discover the Church at Corinth organized in a city of fashion, luxury, and licentiousness. Thus, a remarkable illustration of God's grace and demonstration of gospel power shows it is adapted to meet and overcome wickedness in all forms, and bring all classes of people in subjection to itself. A Church established among the insincere and intemperate in the capital of Achaia reveals that there cannot be any city on earth so degenerate that the gospel of Christ may not meet its dishonest and fraudulent conduct and subjugate it to Christ and the gospel. After his preliminary work at Corinth, Paul visited the church again about 58 A.D., or six years after having established the church there. His fifth visit to the city occurred when He spent the winter in Greece, or so it is believed, and most probably in Corinth and its neighborhood, on his way from Macedonia to Jerusalem. While in Corinth, he wrote the Epistle to the Romans.

Being a predominant city of Greece in the region called Achaia, Corinth was situated on the narrow part of land that joined Peloponnesus to the rest of Greece. It lay on the southern side, with two adjoining ports. One port was located at the lower extremity of the Corinthian Gulf, called Lechaem, from which Corinth traded to Italy and the west. The other was located at Cenchrea, a more remote situation, from which trade incurred with Asia. Location provided Corinth with wealth and trade, promoting affluence, luxury of all kinds, contributing to its infamous sexual vices. Noted for fornication, a proverbial phrase was "Corinthian woman." To play the Corinthian was to "indulge in whorish inclinations."

It was in this city, prone to such sexual indecencies, that the blessings of God enabled Paul to plant and raise a Christian church, for the most part, among Gentiles. Acts 18:1-18 tells the story of Paul's missionary endeavors among them. In 1 Corinthians chapter twelve Paul confronts them with, "You know that you were

Gentiles, carried away to those dumb idols even as ye were led." Some were Jews, for "Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house," (Acts 18:8).

Natural offspring of the carnal corrupt mind: pride, covetousness, opulence, licentiousness; are all sustained by the material wealth of Corinth. Among noted problems of the church members in this great city, were party factions (3:1-23), and noted disorders in the exercise of spiritual gifts (Chapters 12-14). Vice not entirely fed by wealth was rampant, for even the poorer classes were sensuous. Full of rhetoricians and philosophers, vain men, self-conceited, the Corinthians despised plain doctrine because it did not feed their curiosity which was promoted by their inquisitive, disputing temper and their insight acquired from Greek learning and philosophy, (Chapters 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 11). Manifested in their many litigations, before heathen judges, their possessive attitude is clearly defined (Chapter 6). Neither did the plain, simple teachings of Paul please the ear with elaborate, crafty speeches and flowing erudition. Among the Christians, depravity is revealed in their criminal contempt of the poor brethren (Chapter 11). A major and obvious manifestation of their lust is the instance of a man having his father's wife, which could have been marriage to her or fornication with her, and their inability to recognize the error (Chapter 5).

Sometime after his departure, Paul wrote this epistle to the Christians at Corinth, desiring to water his planting and correct some of the gross disorders occurring during his absence. Paul has introduced the letter to them that are sanctified, those that are in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, and to all that call upon the name of Christ. Noting, that in every respect they are distinguished by Christ, enriched by Him, in all utterance and in all knowledge. In these last two phrases referring to the church's enrichment, the apostle seems to be referencing an abundant endowment of "all utterance," or ability to speak in various languages, and in "all knowledge," or in the knowledge of divine truth (Chapter 1:1-9). Some, or many, of the Corinthians had attained a victorious relationship with Christ, the gospel, and the manifestation of the gifts, but problems abounded amongst the remainder and it was necessary for Paul to address these inconsistencies and bring divine order to the church community.

With miraculous testimony of the Holy Spirit confirming their hearts, the gospel of Christ had been established among them, so that they would not be lacking in any gift (especially of the Spirit,

chapters 12-14) as they earnestly await the coming of the Lord. From all this, in 1:6-9, the argument of the apostle is, that as they partake with Christ in these high privileges, and hopes, and promises, they will be kept by a faithful God unto eternal life. God is faithful to his Son; and will be faithful to all who are united to Christ. Some see an argument for the perseverance of the saints here, which is sure, at least as far as God is concerned (1:8). Notwithstanding, men seem to oppose truth, at least at Corinth, and those who do not repent will suffer the consequences. What follows now is a summary of each chapter, pointing out the particular question or questions the apostle is addressing.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **CHAPTER SUMMARIES**

Since the main thrust of this particular study concerns Paul's directions and teachings to the church at Corinth concerning Holy Spirit gifts and manifestations, and in order to keep that aspect in context as we move through First Corinthians, we offer at this point a summary of each chapter leading up to the central ideas in chapters twelve through fourteen. All of these chapters (1-11) are concerned with problems and or questions that the Corinthians had concerning the particular subject Paul addresses. From chapter twelve through fourteen, Paul busies himself with instruction concerning spiritual gifting. In chapter fifteen he provides an astounding summation of the entire document when he speaks concerning the hope of bodily resurrection. Finally, in chapter sixteen Paul concerns himself with a collection for the saints, travel plans to return to Corinth, and admonitions regarding Timothy's forthcoming visit to Corinth.

#### **Summary: Chapter 1**

After his introduction in chapter one, the apostle begins addressing situations in the church that are problematic. He begins in verse ten with 'Now.' This attention getting term, from the Greek δε (de), appears approximately thirty-one times in this same kind of context. (1:10, 12; 2:1; 3:8, 3:12, 4:7, 8, 18; 5:11; 6:7, 13; 7:1, 25; 8:1; 9:25; 10:6, 11; 11:2, 17; 12:1, 4, 18, 20, 27; 14:6; 15:12, 50; 16:1, 5, 7, 10) [See End Notes p. 104].

Beginning at verse ten with the problems and providing admonishment Paul states, "Now - I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," indicating that this admonition is not just from himself but in the "name of Christ." Paul does everything as Christ's representative. His authority is not from himself, but from and through the "name of Christ."

In this instance, Paul is asking the Corinthians to come to a place of unity. They are all to speak the same thing so that no divisions are among them. They are to be perfectly united in the same mind and judgment.

In verse eighteen through the end of the chapter the “wisdom of God” is set against the foolishness of men. God’s ways are not man’s ways. God chose through the foolishness of preaching to save the world. Even though there were great Greek philosophers, erudite teachers, and worldly, wise men, their understanding and wisdom cannot touch the wisdom God has displayed in the mystery of the Gospel message, providing the sacrifice of His Son to redeem the world from sin.

### **Summary: Chapter 2**

In chapter two Paul further unfolds the "wisdom of God" which is “revealed” in a mystery. Our beloved apostle had come to the Corinthians, not on his own accord, but led by the Holy Spirit and his ministry there was in power and demonstration of the Spirit. Proof demonstrated by the Spirit was undoubtedly, the manifestation of the nine gifts, such as the gift of tongues and the remarkable conversions which attended the gospel he preached. It was a gospel of power. Lives were transformed. Peace, joy, and happiness were characteristics of the new life enjoyed by the Corinthians. Idolaters became worshippers of the true and living God. Sinners of every sort, drunks, adulterers, the proud, the haughty, fornicators, adulterers were changed by the gospel preached by our beloved apostle.

Paul proclaims a wisdom among the mature. It was not a wisdom of this world, but in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom of God, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. If the princes of this world had known of this wisdom, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. It was a mystery, not that Paul’s preaching was mysterious, but this wisdom had been “hidden in a mystery” until the time that the gospel was revealed.

A “mystery” is commonly used to describe that which is beyond comprehension and is often applied to doctrines that exhibit difficulties that we are not able to explain. However, this is not the sense commonly used in scripture. Mystery, in scripture, properly denotes that which is hidden or concealed, that which is not yet made known, and applied to truths which until the revelation of Christ were concealed, or hidden in obscure types and shadows or prophecies. These doctrines may be plain, simple, clear, but they are hidden in mystery until such time as they are revealed. This was a radical idea for the Corinthians. The term “mystery,” began also to be applied not only to unknown doctrines, but also to those which were characteristically deep and difficult, to that which is enigmatical and obscure. Paul commonly applies “mystery” to the secret, concealed, design of the Lord to make known His gospel to the Gentiles; to break down the middle wall of partition between



Jew and Gentile; and to spread the blessings of the Gospel in every place. (Rom 11:25, 16:25; Eph 1:9, 3:9, and 6:19).

Paul has provided a KEY to all that he has been saying throughout this entire chapter. Only the “spiritual man” can understand the “mysteries” of God. This understanding, this knowledge pertains to the mystery – that believers should be “born again.” It was an enigma that was not revealed until this time, the time when Christ went to the cross and paid the penalty for our sins. Belief in Christ’s efficacious work brings the believer into the realm of a new life, a new arena, where spiritual things (“mysteries”) are revealed. Hitherto, mankind born into this world by natural birth could not understand the things of God. But now, through the new birth or born-again experience, mankind can enter into the realm of the initiated, the saved, and the mystery is revealed.

### **Summary: Chapter 3**

Then in chapter three the problem of divisions in the Church over the superiority of Paul, Apollos, or Peter (also called Cephas) is preeminent. Some of the redeemed proclaimed Paul as their great leader. Although Paul was a very learned individual, schooled at the feet of Gamaliel, and in every way superior to other Jewish rabbi’s, he did not wish to be hailed as such, and among the learned Corinthians, ministered in the power of the Spirit and not of his status as a learned rabbi. Apollos, a Jew from Alexandria, and one who was well versed in the scriptures became the foremost preacher for some of the Corinthians. Finally, Peter, a first-hand disciple of the Lord, and called by Jesus Christ Himself to be a disciple, became one of the primary persons the Corinthians followed after. Characteristic divisive and disputatious disharmony promoted a party spirit among these Corinthians. This party spirit is the main emphasis, climaxing with Paul's admonition to "let no man glory in men. For all things are yours. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." There is therefore no need for divisions and claims of importance. As believers we are all equal in Christ. There are no big “I’s” and little “you’s.” Believers are all the same in Christ.

### **Summary: Chapter 4**

Chapter four covers the "ministry of apostles." Paul admonishes the Corinthians that apostles are stewards, required to be faithful. In chapter 4:5-7 Paul proclaims, "Therefore judge nothing before

the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God. And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. For who makes you to differ from another? and what do you have that you did not receive: now if you did receive it, why do you glory, as if you had not received it?" No believer in Christ has any room to boast, even Paul and Apollos. Wouldn't it be nice if the Church of today understood this practical teaching and lived accordingly? Any gifting, blessing, authority, or whatever spiritual asset believers "receive" has nothing to do with their superiority, but the graciousness of God, who gives to all men liberally without criticism. Oftentimes, believers will tend to appreciate only particular leaders who obviously have been endowed with giftings that are far superior to others of their acquaintance. These giftings signal the Holy Spirit at work in the Body of Christ and does not immediately sanction any particular person. Later, in chapter thirteen Paul will provide insight into a supreme motivation for Christian characterization and governance.

### **Summary: Chapter 5**

Sexual immorality and its defilement in the church comes to the fore in chapter five. It is a question of someone having his father's wife. A wickedness not even mentioned among the heathen.

Here is a report that has come to Paul, probably from Chloe, or perhaps another source. And such fornication as is reported to Paul is not so much as named or mentioned among the Gentiles. What dastardly act could this be? It is that one should have his father's wife. This corrupt action involves the fornicator's step-mother. Here is sexual immorality at its darkest, a terribly incestuous criminal offence. Yet, the Corinthians are puffed up, inflated, proud, haughty. As members of the body of Christ, the entire congregation should have been stirred and grieved at the utter defilement. In just order they should have disciplined the offender and excommunicated him until such a time as true repentance was exhibited. Yet, their mindset, from their natural surroundings, has not been changed entirely. For those citizens of Corinth, sexual immorality had been so common among them that to commit fornication was known as to "Corinthianize." Even so, fornication

involving one's step-mother was not so named, even among the Gentiles.

Since this sin encapsulates such heinous behavior, Paul has already judged this offender and delivered him to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. The apostle is condemning the actions of the flesh, and treating the flesh as out of sync with God's will and worthy of judgment. Delivering such a one to the Devil, has a purpose: the destruction of the flesh. If he has been truly converted, born again, there is no reason to doubt that his continuing in sin, and the judgment of Christ against him, will awaken within him a need to return to Christ, especially if he truly wants to be saved. His existence will become so depraved and burdensome that seeking relief at Jesus' feet will be his only way of peace and happiness.

Environment has a key role here in the offender's departure from Christian principles. Even though he may have truly been "born again," he has not been trained by doctrine, public teaching, or in some way his carnal mind has been darkened with lust and tempered by the sinfulness of his environment so that he has succumbed to temptation. All men are tempted. However, according to James 1:14, temptation occurs when men are drawn away of their own lusts, which obeying, leads to death. Even so, true repentance is the remedy, even for this fornicator. Later in Paul's writings to the Corinthians, Paul reveals this man's repentance, produced most probably because of the apostle's strict and pungent rebuke (2 Cor 2:5-11). For Paul had turned him over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh (1 Cor 5:5). Being, excommunicated from the fellowship of believers, plagued by Satanic onslaught and pursuit, a piercing reality of his guilt before God began to eat into his conscience and inner faculties until he finally came to his senses and repented.

Body ministry comes into the arena of discussion as Paul questions, "know ye not," or do you not know that it only takes a little leaven to permeate the whole? This term "know ye not," appears at least ten times in 1 Corinthians, (3:16, 5:6, 6:2, 6:3, 6:9, 6:15, 6:16, 6:19, 9:13, and 9:24, see End Note p. 105). Paul explains the position of the Corinthian believers as a "new lump." It is their responsibility then to get rid of the old leaven (sin--in this case fornication, incest). Paul had already written to them that they were not to company with fornicators. You cannot get away from the sin of the world; displayed in the lives of the covetous, extortioners, idolaters; to do so you would have to leave this world.

You cannot get away from the sin of the world, but you do not have to keep company with or court the world. Therefore, you are not to keep company with or involve yourselves with anyone who calls himself a brother, if that “brother” be a “fornicator.” Do not keep company with him, not even to eat. The same is true for the covetous, idolaters, revilers, drunkards, and extortioners: NOT EVEN TO EAT WITH THEM. Eating with profane persons as those in the previous list is to fellowship with them. Later the apostle teaches the Lord’s Table is an example of fellowship among believers as they are gathered around the elements, bread and wine, which represent the Lord’s body and blood. Someone said that fellowship was two fellows in a boat or ship on the same journey. It is impossible for saved and unsaved, saint and sinner, to fellowship in that sense. Rubbing shoulders with the world creates problems. Evil communication corrupts good manners.

God judges those who are outside the community of believers. But, the fellowship of believers is to judge those who are within its confines. Therefore, when and if a person who calls himself a believer, is guilty of such gross sinfulness as named above, the church is to excommunicate the offender from its fellowship.

At one time, during a pastoral conference this writer was attending, one of the speakers gave an example of an instance in which he had to take spiritual authority and excommunicate an influential person from his congregation. It seems this violator offended by involvement in an illicit sexual encounter. His wife was not privy to what was happening. When the pastor discovered the sin in this brother’s life, he confronted him. But the errant brother did not wish to repent. So, the pastor advised, “if you won’t repent, then I will have to discover your behavior to your wife.” Continuing with his sinfulness, the offender remained unrepentant. Accordingly, the pastor informed the errant leader’s wife. Afterwards, the pastor and church leaders excommunicated the fallen brother. The behavior exemplified by the unrepentant offender could not be tolerated. To allow this offensive behavior, in the members of the body of Christ, especially in one who was influential in the congregation would give way to evil.

Perhaps younger members today would consider adultery as acceptable because brother so and so, as everyone knows, was allowed to stay in the church, even hold a position in the church, while involved with another woman. It only takes a little leaven to permeate the whole church family. A gross sin becomes acceptable

to the whole group. Although Paul seems to allow for divorce and remarriage in certain cases, this is not the norm for the Christian. In worldly society, divorce and remarriage has become the norm. If marriage doesn't work out, partners can always divorce and try marriage again with someone else. A despicable plague of modern society is for couples to forego marriage, cohabit as if they were, raise children out of wedlock, and break their relationship whenever serious problems arise. This modern approach invades church society and is not corrected unless sound biblical preaching and teaching is promoted. Any unbiblical trend violates the sanctity of the biblical interpretation of marriage. And of course, in the twenty-first century, there are other sexual perversions that could be addressed. Courting the world's ideas, rather than sticking with scripture, leads to disaster.

### **Summary: Chapter 6**

In chapter six Paul addresses believers going to court in lawsuits against one another. Greeks were not only quarrelsome, but seemed to gain pleasure in going to law, to settle their disputes, gaining a kind of superiority if they won the suit. Thinking on these behaviors brings to mind the modern television program "Judge Judy" and others like it. In these programs law suits between individuals are decided by the judge with the understanding that the ruling cannot be changed or averted in any fashion. Whatever the judge rules will remain without recourse. All anyone needs is to view programs of this nature a few times and see just how petty some of the issues are. Although some cases seem to have at least some merit, it is a quarrelsome and vindictive atmosphere. Paul's approach entertains the idea that the Corinthians should have enough common sense, especially as Christians, who also have the Spirit of Christ, to judge in small matters. Christians may need legal counsel, but for opposing Christians to revert to law courts in a spirit of rancor only proves that their worldliness is stronger than their Christianity. Sometimes, there is no other way to obtain relief in a dispute among Christians except litigation. However, whenever and if possible, a dispute can be settled by utilizing the brotherhood of believers, it should be so dissolved. Go to court only when there is no other remedy.

Let us note specifically, in the scenario above, Paul is addressing Christians taking Christians to court. It is not necessarily wrong for a Christian to take a non-Christian to court for redress. Every

situation must be weighed in the balance. Indeed, in modern society, many legal disputations arise for which there is no redress except going to court for settlement. Christians should pray earnestly in every situation for guidance from the Holy Spirit. After all, Jesus did teach, “And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also” (Mat 5:40).

### **Summary: Chapter 7**

Then in chapter seven, “Now, concerning the things whereof you wrote unto me.” Apparently, the Corinthians had questions for Paul and had written him concerning those subjects. From 1:11 we saw that the household of Chloe had been in contact with Paul. There has been some correspondence because Paul is writing at least three letters, two of which appear in scripture, 1 and 2 Corinthians. Exactly how much correspondence Paul received from the Corinthians, or exactly how many letters he wrote to them, is not readily known. Some scholars think there were more than three letters. Up to this point, Paul has been answering things “reported” unto him. Distinct accents in the letter may be noted as ‘things reported,’ (5:1) and ‘things written’ (5:9, 7:1). (See introductory material pages 8-11). Obviously, a question concerning marriage is the subject of chapter seven, where the apostle covers marriage, divorce, separation and such like.

Marriage was implemented by God for the propagation of the human race, and to prevent fornication. Because the sexual relationship between a man and woman involves three realms: body (physical, body of flesh), soul (emotions, mind), and spirit (innermost part of human makeup, heart), Paul admonishes every man to have his own wife, every woman her own husband, and for each to render due benevolence. So, responsibility in marriage becomes the issue. When a couple is married, each participant loses independence. A mutual existence for gratification, and sexual pleasure is the key. Neither is to defraud the other, or withhold sexual pleasure without consent, which is to be given so that the marriage partner may give himself/herself to prayer and fasting.

When episodes of fasting and prayer have been attended to, Paul says “come together again,” or continue in your marital functions. A reason is given – to prevent Satan from tempting you for your sexual incontinency, or your ability to remain sexually pure. There is no room in the marriage relationship for petty grudges, withdrawing from sexual encounter, or abstinence, for the sake of

one's own self-pleasure. Marriage is about partnership, not individuality. Marriage is meeting the needs of your spouse. It is not for the singular purpose of getting your own needs met.

According to Paul, it is better to marry than to burn with sexual desire. Once married, the relationship is to continue, without interruption except in extreme cases where separation may be allowed or forced, as for instance, in the case of military personnel who have been called to duty or war. Separation for other reasons may become desirable or necessary, however, the marriage partners who separate are to remain pure, and when possible be reconciled to their partner. Paul specifically says "let not the husband put away his wife." Divorce is not allowed except in cases of infidelity when the marriage bond is broken or in the case of mixed marriages as Paul directs in verses 12-15, "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord." Apparently, to this group the apostle is referring to mixed marriages of believers to unbelievers. "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases*: but God hath called us to peace."

### **Summary: Chapter 8**

A question concerning eating meats offered in sacrifice to idols is the subject of chapter eight. It seemed to be a common practice for the Corinthians to go to the shambles or markets and purchase meat as a regular part of diet. Meats at the marketplace were usually dedicated to idols. Doubtless the great mass of the pagan world regarded dumb idols as proper objects of worship. Paul's discourse shows that the Corinthians in the body of Christ, or at least most of them should have, understood that idols are nothing and any gifts or sacrifices offered to idols were not sacrifices at all. There is only One God. Meat itself does not commend us to God. Eating meat, that has been dedicated to or offered to idols may cause the uninitiated to think the believers are worshipping devils, or the weak brother may think that he himself is worshipping devils, because meat consumed is offered to idols. Being inconsiderate of these weak Christians would be to sin against Christ, because the commandment is to love your brother. Christians are not to be so

emboldened in their actions that they disregard the weak conscience of their brother.

This eighth chapter is very important in regard to Christian conduct. Mainly because it settles some principles in regard to issues that Christians in every generation face. Paul shows how they should act in reference to indifferent things, or things in themselves that may be considered neither right or wrong, and in reference to things that may be considered in themselves as “right and lawful,” but whose indulgence might injure others.

In the present society in North America, eating meat or not eating meat would most probably not be a problem, except, perhaps in some church affiliations. Some of these religious groups wholeheartedly defy eating meat, while others forbid meats which were forbidden by Old Testament guidelines. What would be more pertinent for discussion for the present society, in this writer’s opinion, would be whether to imbibe alcoholic beverages or no. Many Christian congregations in other countries think it no problem to drink wine with a meal, or perhaps in a social gathering. To most Christian congregations in the United States, drinking any kind of alcoholic beverage, for any reason, has been considered unconscionable. However, the laxity in morals, the proliferation of advertisements perpetrated via television and the internet, promotes wine as a common beverage at meals. This idea, especially to the United States could lower the holiness standards in the church and may already be doing so. In addition, laxity in the church world seems to promote drunkenness. Consumption of alcoholic beverages for meals and recreation has become a serious problem in our country.

In the work place of America, especially in the business arena, it is sometimes customary for the staff to have a meal together for an employee that is departing, or some other special occasion. When a Christian is a part of this dining situation their testimony and behavior can be challenged. In many restaurants today wine, beer or some other alcoholic beverage is offered with the meal. When everyone else in the party is imbibing spirits, the Christian who refuses may stand out as a prude, or unsociable. On the reverse, they could also be a glowing testimony and convicting instrument of the Lord. It takes strong religious convictions to resist going along with the crowd and stand as a strong witness for Christ.

Whether imbibing wine with a meal is acceptable in the sight of God or sinful may have something to do with environment. In



some countries drinking wine with the meal is completely acceptable for Christians. It appears that in the New Testament wine was a common drink with meals. Some studies reveal that the beverage used with meals in Jesus' time was practically non-alcoholic, made from a concentrate of grape processing. One main issue here is that water was not always pure. Paul admonishes Timothy in 1 Timothy 5:23 to, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." This injunction appears to be a medicinal remedy for stomach ailments. Other scriptures from Paul's pen remind us "*It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." (Rom 14:21). The candidate for bishop "must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;" (1 Timothy 1:7). Deacons are to "*be* grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;" (1 Timothy 3:8). In Ephesians, the apostle warns, "be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;" (Ephesians 5:18). Aged women are counseled to "*be* in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;" (Titus 2:3).

Even though Paul recognizes the medicinal value of wine, he most certainly recognizes the tendency to be overcome by alcoholic beverage and warns against it. The only certainty against becoming an alcoholic is to never imbibe the fiery liquid at all. Therefore, some Christians require total abstinence in their denominational teachings.

### **Summary: Chapter 9**

Paul's apostleship is the subject of chapter nine. A discussion concerning Paul's rights as an apostle is mentioned. He surrenders his rights to partake of or require payment for his services to the Christian community. It seems that everywhere Paul traveled in ministry, he met those who challenged his authority. In 9:3 Paul says, "Mine answer to them that do examine me is this," – and from this point his argument ensues. First of all, from 9:1-2 Paul says, "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are ye not my work in the Lord? If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord."

Answering those who question him, Paul asks, if he and Barnabas and others with him, have power to eat and drink, to have a wife as

well as other apostles and others of the Lord's brethren. Also, does the apostle have the right to ask for financial support? Those who plant vineyards, feed the flock, do not do so without pay. No, they partake of the fruit of their labors. He questions, "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of things of the altar?" He is referring here to the priests and ministers of the temple under Moses' Law. Paul has the right and authority to receive or even require monetary aid, but he refuses to do so, laboring without charge so that he might present the gospel without charge, and not abuse his authority in the gospel. Paul is free from all men but has made himself a servant to all. He has become all things to all men that he might by some means win some. Paul did receive offerings or benefits from his service to others, but never required them (Philippians 4:15-20). His appeal for the offering for the poor saints at Jerusalem was not for his benefit but theirs (Rom 15:26; 1 Cor 16:3).

### **Summary: Chapter 10**

Corinth was saturated with idolatry. It is no surprise then, that warnings against this pollution are covered in chapter ten. From the context it appears Paul is addressing mostly Jewish converts because he reminisces concerning the Israelite wilderness experience when they left from Egypt. At that time, they were overthrown in the desert because they gave in to idolatry. "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." Being pressed by the crowd's demands, Aaron took their gold, melted it down and created a golden calf. Because he could in no other way curse God's people, Balaam taught Balak, the king of Midian to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication. They committed fornication and 23,000 fell in one day (Num 25:1-9). All of these occurrences are examples and are written for the admonition of believers. With every temptation to idolatry there is a way of escape. In light of all these admonitions Paul charges the Corinthians to "flee from idolatry." "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1 Cor 10:21).

Paul's final admonition, verses 10:31-11:1, is this: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

## Summary: Chapter 11

An issue concerning the woman wearing head coverings during worship and the role of men in areas of authority is the problem Paul speaks to at the beginning of chapter eleven. In using the thought of "head coverings" Paul is probably using this ancient custom of the women "covering their heads" to deal primarily with authority. In 11:3 Paul wants the Corinthians to know "that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." God, Christ, man, then the woman, that is the biblical order of relationships.

Notice what Paul has written in verses 5-17, “. . . every woman that prays or prophesies with *her* head uncovered dishonors her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on *her* head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman *is* of the man, even so *is* the man also by the woman; but all things of God. Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for *her* hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.”

In today's society men and women get bent out of shape when it comes to authority. In the Church there has to be order. God is the one who decided the order. In Paul's day a woman would not be seen without a head covering or shaved unless she were a prostitute or adulteress. Paul is simply giving the order God has laid down in the scripture. Christ is God, and the Father is God. That is equality. The man is humankind, the woman is humankind. That is equality. However, in the Godhead, Christ is seen as subjected to God. In humankind, the woman is seen as subjected to the man. What Paul is addressing here should probably be recognized as pertaining to the Church and home; how relationships within the Church and home are to be handled. This

is not concerning superiority nor inferiority. It has to do with relationships. Within the government of the Church, all members are of equal value. However, God arranged the offices of the Church so that someone is the “go to” person, or the one in authority. It is the same in the relationship between the man and the woman. Commentator David Guzik, in his comments on these verses, helps to bring understanding to this portion of scripture. (See David Guzik, e-Sword on 1 Cor. 11:5-16).

In the latter portion of this chapter the apostle covers problems related to The Lord’s Supper, or Communion. Paul has heard of divisions in the assembly when they are come together to partake of the celebratory meal. When the Corinthians came together for the Lord’s Supper, it was not genuine. Their celebration of the event was distorted. All believers are one body. However, at Corinth, those who were well off despised their poor brethren, and especially the slaves, who could be well educated but were property and profitable for their masters. Upper classes would partake of the Lord’s table before the working class could arrive for the event. In their selfishness they were causing some to be hungry while they themselves were fed and refreshed. Conducting themselves in this manner brought judgment upon them for they were not discerning the Lord’s body (11:30). In other words, an attitude of superiority toward other brothers and sisters in the body of Christ, is the problem. All believers in Christ are on the same level. There are no superiors, although there are offices that require respect, not because of the person, but because of the position. Paul teaches they should tarry for one another, that is wait for each other, and not project themselves forward as if they were the only ones of importance. They are to examine themselves, to understand their own motives or actions toward each other, and repent if their attitude is wrong. Humbling themselves under the correct motive and attitude, they may then, correctly partake of this commemorative meal, that represented the Lord’s sacrifice for sinners. Continuing the practice of censorship places those guilty under Christ’s judgement. Indeed, Paul’s warning concerning their behavior states, “For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation.” Failure to correctly discern the body of Christ places the irreverent Christian in a difficult position. For the one who conducts himself/herself in a manner treating a brother/sister in Christ as inferior, judgement will certainly come.

Could this be the reason some Christians do not receive their healing, because they have not correctly regarded their Christian brother or sister by having an attitude of superiority? This is exactly what Paul seems to be saying, and not only that some are sick but some have already died, probably prematurely because of their behavior. This is a pointed lesson to the entire Church and especially to Church leadership to remember we are all “one body.” There is no room for any leader, or any member for that matter to have an attitude of superiority. We must remember Paul’s admonitions concerning servanthood, chapters three and four.

### **Summaries: Chapters 12 Through 14**

Finally, we come to chapters twelve, thirteen, and fourteen, the main subject of our study. In chapter twelve the apostle speaks concerning spiritual gifts and how they are to operate in the church. It seems the Corinthians had gotten everything all topsy-turvy and Paul's instruction is indeed necessary. Following his elucidation on what the gifts are and their operations, chapter thirteen provides the underlying influence and rule for how the gifts are to function. In this chapter the great apostle gives us insight into the rule of love, the character of love and its graces. All of the spiritual gifts and their operation should be governed by love. And finally, in chapter fourteen, Paul stresses the tongues phenomenon, and how this gift works, its order and governance.

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**COMMENTARY ON GIFTS, BODY MINISTRY,**  
**PROPHECY AND TONGUES**

**Chapter 12: Gifts**

Chapter twelve marks the beginning of a three-chapter discussion on “Spirituals,” or spiritual gifts, the Body of Christ, love, and the gift of tongues. In chapter twelve the apostle deals with the nine spiritual gifts provided the Body, followed by an explanation of importance and function in the Body with many members. Then in chapter thirteen, love is the key to the manifestation of and characteristic governor of these supernatural giftings. Finally, in chapter fourteen, Paul covers the gift of tongues, the interpretation of tongues and prophecy. Tongues, perhaps because of its phenomenal characteristics of supernatural flavor, and the tendency to exalt the importance of one person above another, had become problematic for the Corinthians.

Our discussion of the three chapters begins with chapter twelve. "Now, concerning spiritual gifts," Paul begins, or "concerning spirituals." The term “gifts” does not appear in the Greek text; only “Spirituals.” Paul doesn't want the Corinthians to be ignorant. There are several instances within the Pauline writings that he uses this term "I would not have you ignorant" or a similar construction (Rom. 1:13, 11:25; 1Cor. 10:1; 2Cor. 1:8; 1Th 4:13). In Greek the term ἀγνοέω (agnoeo) is supplied, meaning, "not to know, through lack of information or intelligence". The term can also imply a decision to "ignore, through disinclination, to be ignorant, or not understand." (Strong, e-Sword edition, and Thayer, e-Sword edition).

In any case, it appears that the Corinthians do not understand, for whatever reason, the phenomenon of spiritual gifting that was supplied to the Church when they received Holy Spirit baptism. In order to overcome their ignorance of the Spirit's working, provide an understanding of the gifts and their operation, Paul offers this teaching found in chapters twelve through fourteen.

First of all, the apostle wants them to understand that being Gentiles they were carried away or lead away to respecting "dumb idols." Idolatry was prominent in the Corinthian community as can be readily seen by their offering food to idols, and Paul's addressing questions they had concerning meats and offerings to idols. Secondly, Paul wants them to understand that "no man speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." This writer takes these statements to mean that no one who calls himself a follower of Christ can speak of Jesus Christ as one who is associated with or grouped within the long list of idols Corinthians were familiar with. Our Lord is Supreme, the Son of God. Christ is to be worshipped, as expressed in chapter 1:2, where Paul mentions calling upon the name of Jesus Christ, that is, in recognition of His Lordship. It seems that with all of the idolatry that permeated the Corinthian society, some have only thought of Christ as another deity to be chosen or denied. Paul wants the Corinthians to understand that no man who is under the influence of the Holy Spirit, operating in any manner of the giftings that he will address, can speak evil of Christ.

Another expression Paul addresses in 12:3, "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," requires one who has been "born again," introduced into the spiritual arena of Christendom by the new birth, to have understanding of the Lordship of Christ. Sure, the descriptions, the words surrounding acknowledging Christ as Lord are well apparent in Church culture. However, until one has been saved and introduced into God's kingdom, those descriptions are only words. But, when the soul has experienced the new birth and come into Christ's kingdom, is under the influence of the Divine Spirit, then Christ is indeed recognized as the Lord that He proclaims to be. This understanding is the same today as it was in Paul's day. Unregenerate persons may hear that Jesus is Lord, and may even "say" that Jesus is Lord, but until the Spirit reveals Him, until they are born again, they will never comprehend, nor can they testify to this truth.

We could take this reference at 12:3, to address the idea that so many inconsistencies and problems concerning spiritual matters among the Corinthians has so polluted the Christian congregation that some of its members really are ignorant in their understanding of who Christ actually is. Reverting to chapter two, Paul says in verses 12-13 "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that

are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." Then Paul adds "But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

In chapter eight Paul is addressing the Corinthian tendency to idolatry. It seems that some of the Corinthians have desired to put Christ on the same plane or level as other "deities," which were common to the Corinthian pantheon of gods or idols. Paul says here in 8:4-6 "we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many). But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." In verse 7, "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge." Now we know that in these verses the apostle is addressing eating meats offered to idols. Our point is that idolatry was apparent and proliferated the Corinthian society. These ideas, concerning idolatry, did not just disintegrate when the Church was birthed at Corinth. Most probably, there were some who entered the congregation who were not totally and entirely committed to the veracity of Christian doctrine and teachings. We need only go back to Acts chapter five where Ananias and Saphira had entered the congregation of the Lord, but both were defective in their attitudes and worship. They had given money to the Church, holding back part of the price, agreeing together so that it appeared they had made a far greater sacrifice. Peter charges them with lying to the Holy Ghost, after which they were judged by the Lord and gave up their life here on earth. Simon Magus in Acts chapter eight is another example who seemed to misunderstand the implications of what it means to be a follower of Jesus, when he wanted to purchase the power to distribute the gift of the Holy Ghost. It was necessary for some underlying reason for Paul to speak plainly at the beginning of his address concerning spirituals by proclaiming "no man speaking by the Spirit of God" can call Jesus accursed. Disorder, misunderstanding, as well as pride and self-conceit characterize the Corinthians in their manifestations of spiritual gifts. Paul recognized something that needed to be addressed concerning the issue of Christ as compared to other religions. For Paul, the need was evident in the thoughts and actions of the Corinthians.



Our apostle recognizes gifts, administrations, and operations. In addressing the gifts, Paul recognizes a diversity, many different kinds of gifts, that are provided the Body of Christ. Within Paul's many letters, more than the nine listed here can be identified. Perhaps these giftings specified in Corinthians, are primary, and other giftings are complementary. At least these nine are specified or directly identified. There, are differences, in administrations. Adam Clarke refers to these as "apostle, prophet, and teacher; under which were probably included bishop or presbyter, pastor, deacon, etc." Qualifications for the named offices, as well as the appointments themselves, come directly from the one Lord Jesus Christ. In addition, there are diversities of operations. Again, from Clarke we learn, "Miraculous influences exerted on others; such as the expulsion of demons, inflicting extraordinary punishments, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, Elymas the sorcerer, etc., the healing of different diseases, raising the dead, etc.: all these proceeded from God the Father, as the fountain of all goodness and power, and the immediate dispenser of every good and perfect gift." Further, Clark details gifts, administrations and operations in this manner: "Gifts are attributed to the Holy Spirit, 1Cor. 12:4; Administrations to the Lord Jesus, 1Cor. 12:5; Operations to God the Father, 1Cor. 12:6." All these are manifestations of the one and selfsame Spirit. An excellent work that explains these functions, the Trinity and the Church, the fruit of the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, and the ministry gifts was written by Dr. Charles W. Conn in his book A Balanced Church, published by Pathway Press in 1975.

Looking more intently at Paul's descriptions we learn that there are diversities of gifts. But -- all these work -- that one and the selfsame Spirit -- dividing to every man individually or separately -- according to the Holy Spirit's will. One particular that is of utmost importance is the stipulation that the Holy Spirit supervises the gifts and their operations. It is "one and the selfsame Spirit." There are not multiplicities of the Spirit, but only one Spirit. At times Pentecostals will say, "the Spirit of prophecy fell on someone" or some similar pronouncement. Designations of this sort, according to our reference here are inaccurate. From what we see in these scriptures, a more appropriate reference would be, the gift of prophecy, tongues, working of miracles, or whatever gift is appropriate, "manifested through someone."

Another particular is the fact that when the gifts operate, it is that selfsame Spirit, "dividing to every man severally as he will." It is the Holy Spirit who distributes the gifts, dividing to every member

of the Body, individually, the gift or giftings that the Spirit wills. Many who are acquainted with Pentecostal worship will designate one or another as possessing the gift of prophecy, healing, and so forth. Actually, all of the giftings are resident in the Holy Spirit. Christian believers who have received Holy Spirit baptism have the potential for any or all of the gifts to operate in their life, because all of the giftings are resident in the Holy Spirit. It is important to note that these gifts do not operate except by the will of the Holy Spirit. Sensitivity to any particular gift may be recognized in one or another of God's servants. This sensitivity seems to be accentuated in individuals used in a particular gift, so, it appears, that particular gifts become a part of that person's repertoire. Some are especially used in healing the sick; prophesying to an assembly, or singularly to some person who is worried or apprehensive about the future; or working miracles. It is important to recognize that persons who are operating in these giftings do not own the gift. They are sensitive to the Holy Spirit and operate under His authority and direction. Any gifting can be withheld, removed, or implemented whenever the Holy Spirit desires. It is important to recognize that any Christian believer, filled with the Holy Spirit, can become more sensitive to the Spirit's moving through prayer, fasting, and consecration, making themselves more susceptible to be used by the Spirit. Individual Christians that are used by any particular gift may become more susceptible to that particular gifting. Operating through faith, exercising the gift, the believer becomes aware of the Spirit's direction and control. As in any operation, action, or function, yielding and compliance furnishes experience and understanding for the gift to operate more efficiently. Paul admonished the entire Corinthian community, "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church," (14:12).

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

#### **Gifts Summarized**

##### Word of Wisdom and Word of Knowledge

As to the various gifts, let us now attempt to describe the gift and its operation. To one is given by the Spirit the ‘word of wisdom.’ This particular gift is not wisdom in general. Many Bible scholars, students, writers, preachers, teachers, may have, what seems to be more than a natural wisdom into the things of God. That is not what this gift consists. In essence, the ‘word of wisdom’ is a timely ‘word’ given at a particular juncture to advise one of God’s servants in a particular situation. A ‘word of knowledge’ is another operation of the Spirit, whereby supernatural knowledge is provided at a particular time, which could have been known or discerned in no other way. It seems that the two, ‘word of wisdom’ and ‘word of knowledge’ work together, but not necessarily so.

According to Dr. Charles Conn, while he was General Overseer of the Church of God and functioning as moderator of one of the General Assembly meetings, both of these gifts were in operation in a particular personal way. God gave Dr. Conn a word of knowledge concerning the behavior of some of the constituents of that meeting, who were endeavoring to supplant or undermine the Overseer’s authority. The Holy Spirit through a ‘word of knowledge’ revealed to Dr. Conn exactly who was involved and what shenanigans they were up to. Concurrently, the Holy Spirit, in a ‘word of wisdom’ revealed to Conn exactly what needed to be done to counteract the subversion. He acted as the Holy Spirit directed and the whole situation was diverted. Harmony among the members of the assembly prevailed. By this example we can see these two gifts in operation. Understand, these events were discovered to Dr. Conn by the Holy Spirit, which was a supernatural operation, and could have been discerned in no other way. It was not a human discernment or natural circumstance in which he put two and two together to come to a conclusion. Nor

did some human discover the situation to him. No! Emphatically no! Conn explains in his discussion of the events that this was a supernatural revelation given by the Holy Spirit to assist him in his responsibilities in administering the assembly.

### Gift of Faith

Now, the scripture (12:9) speaks of a gift of faith. We all know that faith is a fruit. For, "the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith . . ." (Galatians 5:22). This faith produces faithfulness or steadfastness. Then in Hebrews chapter eleven appears the "roll call of faith" and a definition at the beginning, "Now faith is." Faith is what? Faith is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Two specific characteristics of faith then are substance and evidence. Faith has substance. It is not wishful thinking. Faith produces evidence that things not seen are absolutely real. According to Matthew Henry, "It is a firm persuasion and expectation that God will perform all that he has promised to us in Christ" (Matthew Henry, e-Sword).

Faith is spoken of in Ephesians 6:16 as a shield for use in spiritual warfare. "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." This faith shield is a vital and integral part of the Christian's armor. The importance of this faith is seen by the fact that:

It takes faith to be saved (John 3:16); to live victoriously over the world (1 John 5:4); to please God (Heb. 11:6); to pray (James 1:6); to have peace with God (Rom. 5:10); to have joy (1 Peter 1:8); to be justified as opposed to works (Galatians 2:16); to be made righteous (Romans 10:1-4); to receive the Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:2); to live the Christian life (Galatians 2:20); for Christ to dwell in your heart (Ephesians 3:17); and more importantly, "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23).

However, this fruit of the Spirit is not the faith that is spoken of in 1 Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 12:9, Paul is specifically speaking of a "gift" or operation of the Spirit that is not normally a part of the Christian experience. This is a supernatural gift. A gifting that lifts the spirit of the believer to a condition in which results are activated and received.

There comes a time in life when the depressed in spirit and soul need a deliverance that they cannot attain in their own strength. We are taught to "trust in the Lord with all thine heart." Even so, there

are seasons, situations, that occur when the human spirit cannot seem to attain victory. Faith, human faith, Christian faith, has been expended to its fullest and still, there is no deliverance. But, when God decides to send deliverance, it is a supernatural occurrence, and not something worked up in the mind of man.

Some person may seek deliverance from a sickness, disease, trouble, turmoil, impossible situation, in which the believer might possibly be expected to "have faith" and overcome. Faith, normal Christian faith, is not bringing the desired answer. Then, the Holy Spirit, either working within the one who needs deliverance or through one whom God has provided to bring deliverance, moves upon or within one or another of the individuals with a measure of faith that cannot and will not be denied, because the Holy Spirit has provided this supernatural faith through an operation of the Spirit.

Now, Christians know, or at least should know, that everything we receive from God comes by faith. We are saved by faith; we continue in our relationship with the Lord by faith; carry out our responsibilities in ministry by faith; resist and conquer spiritual enemies by faith; and everything one could name concerning our walk with the Lord is based on "faith." Still, there is an operation of the Spirit, that can come in no other way, except it is a supernatural operation of the Spirit. It is important that this be understood.

Most of us can relate to someone, maybe even ourselves, who have stated that we had faith for some particular situation. However, optimism is not what we speak of here. Anyone can study positive thinking and come forth with a stronger positive attitude and become successful to a point. That is not what this gift of faith is all about.

So called faith healers, or persons regarded as such, who were used to activate the gift of faith, are sometimes looked upon as the miracle worker. But it is not the person. It is the gift working through the person who is yielded to the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit has chosen to display God's glory by bringing the victory to the person in need. This kind of faith cannot be conjured up or manipulated. It is a gift of the Spirit. So, bear in mind, no matter how much faith some Christian preachers, teachers, leaders, seem to have, this gifting of the Spirit is superior to every kind of faith imaginable and rewards the obedient with answers.

Oral Roberts used to say of this kind of faith, "I know that I know that I know, such and such is going to come to pass." This is an undeniable, unsinkable, faith, trust and dependence upon Almighty God, that can be supplied only by the Spirit of God.

Billy Joe Daugherty from Tulsa, OK built a wonderful ministry in that city based on faith in God. He told his sons that he knew in his heart, the gift of faith again working, he "knew" that his ministry efforts would culminate successfully. Many could testify of times when God has spoken concerning certain matters and there was no way to convince them otherwise, and just as was revealed to them, the event was realized.

### Gifts of Healing

Akin to this supernatural gift of faith and most probably often times working synchronously with that kind of faith is the supernatural gift of healing. Pentecostal churches have been noted for their stand and belief of divine healing "provided in the atonement." That is, they believe that Christ's sacrifice on the cross included healing, according to Isaiah 53:5, "with his stripes we are healed." Within the Pentecostal ranks there were many so called "faith" healers who appeared from 1946 through the late 1950's. They were called "faith" healers because, people with various diseases, blindness, the crippled and lame, would attend their meetings and would be healed by faith, attributed to either the faith of the evangelist, those in the congregation, the person receiving the miracle of healing and most possibly a combination of all of these. Countless miracles of healing took place. Oral Roberts and William Branham were described by historian David Edwin Harrell as the two giants of the movement. Roberts emerged as the most popular figure and left the most lasting legacy, which we know as Oral Roberts University. Branham was the source of inspiration for T.L. Osborn and dozens of others. Jack Coe and A.A. Allen were also major personalities of this time.

From the biblical perspective, Peter and John went to the Temple to pray at three in the afternoon. There was a beggar there who was crippled from his mother's womb. When this beggar asked Peter and John for alms, "Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received

strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God," (Acts 3:4-8).

Peter came to Lydda and found a certain man, Aeneas, who was sick of the palsy and had been in bed for eight years. "And Peter said unto him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ makes you whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately," (Acts 9:32-34).

Another example is Paul healing the lame man at Lystra. "And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. The same heard Paul speak: who steadfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, Said, with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked," (Acts 14:8-10).

#### Working of Miracles

Then Paul mentions the gift of working of miracles. When this gift is in operation, a manifestation takes place that could not have occurred in any other way. An axe-head floating in the water, a multiplication of fish and loaves, someone being raised from the dead, would all be miracles. Such were examples of miracles wrought by Elisha in the Old Testament, Jesus in the New Testament, and apostles in the book of Acts. The story of Peter raising Dorcas from the dead appears in Acts 9:36-41. From Strong's Greek Dictionary, the word miracle in Greek is δύναμις (dunamis), which may be defined as force, literally or figuratively. It is specifically miraculous power. Usually by implication, it is a miracle itself. Thayer says that 'dunamis' is "strength power, ability." And it is "power for performing miracles."

Miracles in the last two centuries can be attributed to many of the faith healers, who like A.A. Allen spoke to situations and undoubtedly a miracle occurred. Examples, especially when prayer is offered for the resulting manifestation, can be found in the body of Christ in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

One of the most spectacular miracles of healing occurred when A.A. Allen had his tent up in Birmingham, AL. There was a woman who came from Knoxville, TN to attend the meetings for the purpose of obtaining healing for her four-year-old son. (You can find the full story by clicking on the following link <https://olori-wendy.blogspot.com/2016/08/amazing-miracle-four-years-old-boy.html?m=1>). This child was blind, lame, deaf, and it

was said that he had at least twenty-six ailments. On the last night she could afford to be in the meeting, the mother gave her last dollar responding to the nightly offering. When Allen came to the podium to begin ministering to the crowd, he had an open vision. God showed him the doctors gathered around the child when it was born and how the doctors were saying that there were twenty-six ailments affecting this poor child. Then he saw in his vision, an automobile getting onto the high way, travelling into Alabama, driving upon the property where the tent was located. Allen called for whoever this person was, who had made the journey for her child to be healed, the child that had all of these ailments, to bring the baby because God was going to heal him. R.W. Shambach, one of Allen's associate preachers at that time, later said that he had determined to keep his eyes open to see God work this miracle. His explanation of what happened went something like this:

Allen took the boy in his arms. When brother Allen prayed, the child's tongue, which was sticking out of his mouth, automatically receded into its normal position. Where his clubbed feet once were, newly formed feet appeared. His eyes, which were only white globs in the sockets were immediately healed and new eyes with pupils formed. His ears were opened and hearing became real to him. Internal organs and other ailments which may have not been as noticeable were immediately cured. When the Spirit had finished His work, Allen put the child down and immediately he ran to his mother calling "momma."

Shambach said that every person under that tent who came for healing that night was healed in one instance, one supernaturally charged moment, as a surge of Holy Spirit power and presence permeated the tent. All the stretchers and wheel chairs were emptied as people leaped to their feet.

Of course, miracles of healing are not all that we may address with examples. On the African continent, the ministry of Evangelist Reinhardt Bonnke, one of the most noted evangelists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, abounds with testimonies of healings, miracles and such like. Including in these testimonies are persons raised from the dead. In one of Bonnke's services a Nigerian woman brought her husband's partially embalmed body to the service in a coffin, hoping he would be raised from the dead. Although Bonnke was unaware of the situation, and never prayed for the man, in front of thousands of witnesses, this dead man,



unable to move because of rigor mortis, was raised back to life. This testimony is available in book form and can be found on the internet by searching for, Raised From the Dead, Whitaker House: 2014.

Another miraculous event that occurred is not in the same category as the healing and raising the dead. But, is no less a miracle. A minister of whom this preacher is acquainted had a grown daughter who had left home and he had no idea where his daughter had gone. Several months had passed with no understanding of where she was. This brother became anxious about his daughter's welfare and was fervently praying for her. In the early morning hours of a particular day, the Holy Spirit told him to call a certain McDonald's restaurant in a European country. He had no idea how to do this. With the Holy Spirit's help, and assistance from the telephone company, he was able to connect with the McDonald's restaurant, asked to speak to his daughter, calling her by name. The person that answered the phone called out the girl's name. At the moment her name was called, she happened to be walking past this particular McDonald's restaurant. When she heard her name called, she could hardly believe what she heard. Answering the phone, she heard her dad talking to her. Now, that is a miracle. God knew exactly how to get all the timing worked out for this man of God to make the call at exactly the right time, because God is a miracle working God, and I might add, God is concerned with whatever concerns us.

### Gift of Prophecy

Prophecy is an interesting gift which operated throughout scripture and continues into the present time. Actually, preaching, can be designated as prophetic and supernatural gifting. However, this is not just the kind of preaching-teaching, where someone studies a selection of scripture, develops a three-point sermon and stands to give it to the church. Just speaking forth the Word of God in proclamation, or from memory could be designated prophesying. But, prophesying, as a gift of the Spirit, is an anointing and gifting that comes from a supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit, that rests upon the speaker, and works through the subject as the pronouncement is made.

Pentecostal, spirit-filled, and anointed preaching is akin to what this gifting would be in the Church. This does not mean that the entire sermon is prophetic. At some point in the preacher's sermon delivery may come a "word" directly from the Spirit, spoken

through the preacher, that will connect with those present, fit the designations of edification, exhortation, and comfort, and may be futuristic. In other words, the message may be entirely futuristic, or speak directly to someone in revealing the secrets and intents of the heart.

This form of prophetic, anointed preaching is generally characterized by a highly emotional, or invigorated, animated delivery, but does not necessarily have to be. However, just because a preacher is Pentecostal, loud, or energized when he preaches, does not necessarily mean he is prophesying. He may be anointed by the Spirit and still not be prophesying according to the manifestation Paul addresses here. He may just be speaking what he has studied and prepared as a lesson for the congregation. Truth revealed to the preacher as study ensues is what we mean here. There is a thin line between prophetic and anointed preaching. All of us Pentecostals have heard preachers that were anointed, speaking an invigorated and lively message with power. And most of us have also heard preachers who were supposed to be preaching but their message seemed to be without any life at all. If they prepared themselves at all, they were simply speaking from study and not with anointing. Perhaps the preacher had not “prayed through” or soaked the sermon in prayer, seeking until he received an answer from God. In any case, prophecy, according to Paul has some requirements. In the particular sense he speaks of this gift in 1 Corinthians 12:10, the reference is to a particular “gift” of the Spirit because he is describing the nine gifts of the Spirit.

In 1 Corinthians 14:3, "But he that prophesies speaks unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." Prophets are to prophesy or speak and others, prophets or members of the congregation, are to judge. Upon what is this judgment based? The preceding verse dictates the questions. Did the message bring edification? Did it build up or strengthen those to whom it was spoken? Secondly, was the message an exhortation? What did Paul mean by exhortation? In Greek, the term used here in Corinthians means: to admonish, entreat, beseech, encourage, strengthen by consolation, to teach. Finally, the third qualification Paul offers for the prophetic utterance is that it provides consolation or comfort. With all the instabilities of our environment, a sure word of prophecy, a word from the Lord, provides comfort to listening hearts. As is the case with all workings of the Spirit, the Word of God is the supreme test. Holy Spirit inspired prophetic utterances will never violate what has already been written in God's Word.

Then, there is the futuristic element in prophecy. That is, the statement given speaks of something that will come to pass in the future. Scripture is replete with prophetic utterances related to future occurrences. A study of the prophets, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, for example, will reveal futuristic prophetic utterance. However, in the present time, the Holy Spirit still speaks in prophetic utterance through the gift of prophecy. This does NOT make the utterance EQUAL with prophecy that has been recorded in SCRIPTURE! We know that scripture is SEALED. Nothing can be added or taken from it. However, the Holy Spirit can still provide futuristic information to the Church, or individual believers for edification, exhortation and comfort. Usually fulfillment of prophetic utterances of this sort will occur in a near future event, because this gifting is for the edification of those present, and for their lifetime. For example: The pastor of a church in rural Alabama had a member, one of the brethren, who was called to preach and was needing a congregation to serve. Because of this brother's sinful background as a backslider, and because of certain teachings and regulations in his church denomination, it was impossible for him to be a pastor, even though he had repented and was now serving the Lord with all of his heart. However, one evening while the pastor was preaching, the Holy Spirit stopped him to speak directly to this brother. Possessing absolutely no knowledge of the future or any of the developments that eventually transpired, the pastor stopped his sermon delivery spoke directly to the minister in question and told him that God had a place for him and the door would soon open. Within a short time, a pastoral position opened at a church within twenty-five miles of this brother's home. The presiding leader placed this brother as pastor of that church. He remained there many years serving the Lord and that congregation.

Another time, and another place, the church was gathered together in a prayer circle, praying for one of the younger brethren in the church to have transportation to work. His vehicle had broken, he had no means to repair it, or some other situation had arisen that prevented his being able to travel to his place of employment. During this prayer meeting, the Holy Spirit gave a message in tongues and interpretation, telling this young man that transportation would be provided him. Before the meeting ended, one of the sisters of the church, who was not present on the church campus when this message came forth but came in after all of this occurred, and was privy to none of it, discovered the young man

had a need, and offered her automobile for him to drive to meet his transportation requirement.

Another prime example comes from the life of a gentleman who was a Hindu. His mother had been converted to Christianity and many were praying for her son to also be converted. This young man outright rebuked the Christians, and rebelled against God, running with all his might away from the presence of the Lord, involving himself in commitments that would preclude fulfillment of a prophecy spoken concerning him. But the prophecy was given, saying he would indeed be coming into the fold and would be a minister for Christ. Thinking that he could resist God, he had continued in his own pursuits, but God had other plans. Through several events that summarily occurred this man was saved, is a wonderful Christian leader today and responsible for multitudes coming into the kingdom of God.

Many other examples could be supplied. One item that needs clarification here is that tongues with interpretation is equal to prophecy. Whether the message is futuristic or not. Sometimes, a message in tongues and interpretation will meet the same requirement of edification, exhortation, and comfort, for these gifts working together are equal to prophecy. At other times the message in tongues with interpretation will prophesy future events. In all cases, if the prophetic utterance is from the Lord, it will come to pass.

Memory of past spirit-filled services this preacher attended contains an event where the Holy Spirit, through tongues and interpretation, was warning someone in the congregation of future distress, a problem of which the Holy Spirit would not be able to resolve if this person continued resisting the Spirit's call to repentance. A young lady who was a backslider was in that meeting. Many believed that this person would sin away her day of grace and become hardened against the Lord and unable to repent. Within a few months this young lady found herself pregnant, though she was not and had never been married. Her pregnancy was not a coincidental incident for Spirit-filled believers in the fellowship at the time the message was given knew to whom the Spirit was speaking. When the situation manifested it was plain to the body of believers how God had forewarned the event. No doubt in my mind, God was trying to bring her to fellowship with Him and prevent such pain and disgrace that she eventually endured.

### Divers Kinds of Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues

Another supernatural gift of the Spirit is "divers or many kinds of tongues." The word "divers" is supplied by translators in the KJV to provide the reader with the idea from the Greek, that many or varied tongues or languages are gifts to the body of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. This verse may be applied to instances when missionaries are provided supernaturally with a gift that gives the ability to speak in various kinds of languages. Paul J. Cunningham, a Pentecostal preacher, and personal friend of this writer, was a missionary/evangelist to many countries of the world, including various Latin speaking countries, as well as some of the countries of Europe, and could speak fluently in any of these languages. As far as I know in my communications with him, he had never been schooled in either of these languages. Cunningham had been called into a specific ministry by a vision he had received from the Holy Spirit, and was gifted to carry out his purpose.

Testimonies abound in which someone from a language other than English, was visiting a Pentecostal church and heard a message spoken in tongues, spoken in their native language, with a call to repentance, a message of comfort, or warning, but the message was coming from someone who only spoke English. In one specific incident, a preacher in one of the New England states, who knew and spoke only the English language, was preaching, started speaking in tongues, and a gentleman from the street came in to find salvation because he understood God calling him to repentance in his native tongue through the voice of this preacher.

Then there are tongues that are of a "heavenly" nature, which angels may speak, or a language that only God understands, provided by the Spirit when Christians, so gifted, pray to God. One who prays in an unknown tongue speaks not unto men, but unto God. Only the person through whom this gift is manifesting needs the interpretation, so that he may understand what his spirit is saying unto God, (1 Corinthians 14:14-15). Most of the time praying in tongues is in a private devotional or in the midst of a few who are themselves engaged in prayer in the Spirit, so that no confusion is involved. However, when the gift of tongues is manifested within the community of believers gathered together in worship, another gift, interpreting to the body what the Spirit is saying through tongues is utilized. More about this gift will be covered in our discussion of chapter fourteen.

### Discerning of Spirits

Supernatural gifting also includes the gift for "discerning of spirits." Many have misused or misinterpreted this gift. Primarily the gift is to provide ability to discern, distinguish, or judge, whether a certain manifestation or behavior originates from the Holy Spirit, human spirit or whether it is demonic. When Peter confronted Ananias and Saphira (Acts 5:1-11), he was able to discern the heart of these individuals, and know that their intents and motives were not pure. When Paul, ministering at Philippi (Acts 16:16-19), was continually pressed in the Spirit because a woman with a spirit of divination followed him day by day, he recognized or discerned in the Spirit, what was happening, turned rebuking the spirit, and the demon came out of her.

### **Nine Gifts, One Spirit**

In conclusion, concerning the spiritual gifts mentioned here in 1 Corinthians chapter twelve, Paul states, "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (12:11). In verses eight through ten Paul does not focus on detailing each gift he lists, although we tend to. Since he does not give a detailed description of each gift, it is probable that the Corinthian Christians were well familiar with them all. What Paul wants to emphasize is that each of these is 'by' or 'through the same Spirit,' repeating the idea five times (verse 8, 2 times; verse 9, 2 times; in verse 11, 1 time) and concluding with the statement, 'But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit.' It appears the Corinthian's tendency to division produced an atmosphere of competition concerning the gifts. We might imagine persons who "spoke in tongues" as thinking themselves superior to those who prophesied. Which, according to Paul is vice versa. That is, the "prophesiers" are superior in their gift to the "tongues speakers," because prophesying produces edification, exhortation, and comfort, and tongues without interpretation is unprofitable to the community. Paul's emphasis to the Corinthians is that it is one Spirit, and always the same Spirit that is at work through them. No one is to seek superiority, but unity. It is the Holy Spirit who provides the giftings to the body. The Holy Spirit decides who the gift is manifested through, what gift is to be used and the timing of each. Members of the body of Christ are to earnestly desire the best gifts, which will be covered in our discussion of chapter thirteen.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CHAPTER 12 (continued) – BODY MINISTRY

Paul begins his discourse on “body ministry” in verse twelve with, “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also, *is* Christ.” In verse thirteen the apostle gives reasoning for the former statement, “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.” Every person, every believing person, who has been placed into the body of Christ, has been placed into the body by a work of the Holy Spirit. On this idea, “baptized into one body,” Albert Barnes had this to say, “Many suppose that there is reference here to the ordinance of baptism by water. But the connection seems rather to require us to understand it of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Matt 3:11; and if so, it means, that by the agency of the Holy Spirit, they had all been suited, each to his appropriate place, to constitute the body of Christ - the church.”

Understanding baptism in Paul’s writings requires more than a surface glance at what he has written. For instance, the tendency for Bible students who are confronted in scripture with the term “baptism,” is to think that “water baptism” is intended by that terminology. This writer’s understanding of “baptism” does not follow that general tradition. Understandably this position requires explanation.

In Greek terminology the term βαπτίζω (baptidzo), according to Strong has the meaning “make whelmed, or fully wet.” This term is used only in the New Testament referring to the ordinance of baptism. Thayer adds, “to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge, to overwhelm.” Βάπτισμα (baptisma), a derivative of the former term, according to Thayer has the following nuances, “immersion, submersion.” This has to do with a baptism “of calamities with which one is quite overwhelmed.” It also refers to rites such as John’s baptism, or the purification rite by which men on confessing their sins were bound to spiritual reformation, obtained the pardon of their past sins and became qualified for the benefits of Messiah’s kingdom, which was in the near future. This was valid

Christian baptism, as this was the only baptism the apostles received and it is not recorded anywhere that they were ever rebaptized after Pentecost. In 1 Corinthians 10:2 Paul speaks of the Israelites who were “baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.”

A third nuance of the term referred to Christian baptism. It is a rite of immersion in water as commanded by Christ, by which one after confessing his sins and professing his faith in Christ, having been born again by the Holy Spirit unto a new life, identifies publicly with the fellowship of Christ and the church.

Another Greek term, βάπτω (bapto) means “to dip, dip in, immerse” according to Thayer. This term can also mean “to dip into dye, to dye, to color.”

The term “baptism,” βάπτισμα (baptisma) technically and figuratively, means “baptism.” [Note: all of these terms under study come from Strong and Thayer’s works located at e-Sword.]

We turn our attention now to look at the components of baptism that Paul uses, which are three. First, there is the person who performs the baptism (baptizer/agent/facilitator). Then, there is the person to be baptized (candidate), and third, the element for baptism (water, Holy Spirit, Body of Christ).

In water baptism, of course, the element is water. The person who is going to be baptized in water, who is going to be dipped or submerged into the water, and then raised up out of the water is the candidate. The person who will perform the baptism is the baptizer, agent or the facilitator (usually an ordained minister).

In our next analogy, concerning Holy Spirit baptism, the candidate is the believer who will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. The idea here is that the Holy Spirit is going to come upon the believer, immersing the believer in the Holy Spirit’s presence. The individual so baptized will not only be immersed in the Spirit of God, he/she will also be filled (that is their human spirit will be filled) and running over so much so that the Holy Spirit will speak through the believer. This is exactly what occurred at Pentecost (Acts 2:4). The element is the Holy Spirit (not water, but Holy Spirit), and the baptizer or facilitator is Jesus (not the pastor), (Matt 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33).

Lastly, Body Baptism, or being baptized into the Body of Christ, includes the following format and particulars. Whether the baptism referred to is water, Holy Spirit, or Body of Christ, the candidate is always the same: which is the believer. In this instance, baptism



into the Body of Christ, the element is the Body of Christ and the facilitator, agent or person who performs this baptism is the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit (baptizer/facilitator) Who places the new believer (candidate) into the Body of Christ (element). This is as simple as one, two, three, but is overlooked and stupefies learned minds. Read exactly what the scripture says. Do not add to it or take away from it.

**Water Baptism:** Three components: Candidate, who is the believer or new convert. Element, which is water. Agent or facilitator, who is the pastor or other official. (Luke 3:16; John 1:26, 33)

**Holy Spirit Baptism:** Three components: Candidate, who is the believer or new convert. Element, is the Holy Spirit. Agent or facilitator is Jesus Christ. (Acts 1:4 “the promise of the Father” and 1:5 “For John truly baptized with water but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence;” John 1:33 “And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is *he which baptizes* with the Holy Ghost.”) [Upon whom did the Spirit descend and remain? Of course, the answer is Christ. So, *it is Christ that baptizes with the Holy Ghost.*]

**Body of Christ Baptism or Baptism into the Body of Christ:** Three components: Candidate, who is the believer or new convert. Element is the Body of Christ. Agent or facilitator is the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13)

Almost without exception, in every instance where 1 Corinthians 12:13 is referenced, the commentator, preacher, or teacher confuses body baptism with Holy Spirit baptism. “For by one Spirit are we all *baptized into one body.*” It is plain. *The one Holy Spirit baptizes the believer into, or immerses the new convert, or places the believer into the Body of Christ.* This baptism has nothing to do with water baptism, or with the believer being baptized *with* the Holy Spirit, as Jesus promised. *This being baptized into the Body of Christ occurs when the believer is “born again.”* Notice again, at the time the believer is “born again,” that believer is placed into or baptized into the Body of Christ. This is not a physical event, as such, but spiritual. However, it is a real or actual event. At the moment the new believer is baptized into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit’s action, he/she becomes a part of a new creation, born again into a new life and has become a

component of the Body which is Christ's. And it does not matter if the believer is Jew or Gentile, whether bond or free, all believers are part of the same Body, and members in particular. When the believer is baptized into the Body, that believer has been especially gifted by the Holy Spirit to function within the Body as the Holy Spirit desires. God's Spirit provides, along with the "new birth" experience, a particular gifting that is unique to that one individual. That gifting may be pastor, teacher, developer, giver, organizer, singer, song director, secretary, soul winner, encourager, prophet, helper, or whatever the Body of Christ needs to function in this world. It is the Holy Spirit that calls, anoints, gifts, every particular member of the Body.

Our emphasis here is not upon the "nine gifts of the Spirit." What this particular segment of discourse is attempting to convey is the fact that *every member* of the Body of Christ, every Christian believer, every individual who has truly been born again, has been *called and anointed by the Holy Spirit with a particular gift* to be used for God's glory. Many times, a new believer will think within themselves that they want to be a preacher. This is not possible, unless the Holy Spirit calls the individual into that ministry. Another may have a natural desire to be a singer, with natural abilities and personality. However, the singer cannot be used of the Lord unless the Holy Spirit has gifted and anointed that individual for that particular ministry. Then, someone else wants to be the leader, the one in control, the one who guides others into a certain area of ministry. In the same manner, unless the person who wants to be a leader is gifted by the Holy Spirit in that direction, chaos may be the result. Most important is for every believer to seek God's face about where they are to function, obey His leadership and He will develop the seeker in due time. Our purpose here is not to extrapolate upon all the various callings that are available to the Body of Christ. In this document, we deal with the nine gifts designated in 1 Corinthians Chapters 12 and 14, specifically and with Paul's analogy of the parts of the Body which refer to various designations and giftings of believers within the Body of Christ.

It is necessary also to note here that God is not interested in one's *natural abilities* or *learned expertise*. This is not to say that God does not use a person's natural abilities or learned abilities. On the contrary, someone who fits either of these categories may be called and anointed by the Holy Spirit for the purpose in which they are trained. However, this is not necessarily so. God can take someone who cannot read one word, or sing one note, or play a single chord on an instrument, gift and anoint that individual for His glory and that person will be greatly used for God. By the same token, God

can take one who is highly trained in a particular field, singing, music, or whatever, and use that person if he/she is yielded to the Holy Spirit, for His glory. Sometimes in the Pentecostal arena schooling and education have been seen as a retardant to the moving of the Holy Spirit. So, for them, anyone who is “*learned*” or “*educated*” cannot be used of the Spirit. How much better could one who is trained, educated, be used of the Lord *if* that person is totally dedicated to God, submitted completely to the Holy Spirit, and seeks with all their heart to bring glory to God. We are to give of our best to the Master. That is why Paul says, “Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the Church” (1 Cor 14:12).

In the latter part of verse 12:13 Paul adds, “have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” Albert Barnes’ comment reads, “The sense is, that by their drinking of the same cup commemorating the death of Christ, they had partaken of the same influences of the Holy Spirit, which descend alike on all who observe that ordinance in a proper manner. They had shown also, that they belonged to the same body, and were all united together; and that however various might be their graces and endowments, yet they all belonged to the same great family” (Barnes, e-Sword).

Paul says in 1 Cor 12:14-31, "For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *were* the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where *were* the body? But now *are they* many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those *members* of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness. For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that *part* which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of

healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. *Are* all apostles? *are* all prophets? *are* all teachers? *are* all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. "

### **Paul Compares Body of Christ with Human Body**

Paul uses an analogy or comparison of the Body of Christ with the human body to emphasize the importance of every particular member of the body. Whether the member of the body is hand, foot, ear, eye, nose, or whatever, every part has its own function and is integrally important for the body to function as God designed it. God has placed every member within the human body for its own purpose. Therefore, the "eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of you: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you," (12:21). No, in no wise could this be, for "those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: and those members of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness." This term "comeliness" in Greek is εὐσχημοσύνη (euschēmosunē) and means charm or elegance of figure, external beauty, decorum, modesty, seemliness. (Thayer, e-Sword). "For our comely (graceful [parenthesis mine]) parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked. That there should be no schism (σχίσμα [schisma] division or dissension, Thayer, e-Sword [parenthesis mine]) in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it" (1 Cor 12:24-26).

In these foregoing verses the apostle is looking at the human body, its members, and how every member of the body is necessary to complete the whole. Every member of the human body is necessary that there be no schism or division in the function of the body. In essence, Paul is showing that in the Body of Christ, no member of the church, no matter how feeble, illiterate, obscure, or whatever designation, should be despised or regarded as unnecessary or without value. All are needful in their place. They do not belong to different bodies, they are all associates, in the same manner that the less honorable and comely parts of the human body belong to the body and are regarded as necessary, and are not to be considered unworthy or unfit to be united to the parts

that are deemed to be more beautiful or honorable (Barnes, e-Sword).

Church life cannot be viewed in the same manner as the secular. In society the ideal is to seek to be better than everyone else. Most graduates from high school, college and university are not looking to be a janitor, house maid, server at a restaurant, or anything of the sort. They all have been trained to seek for the highest profession one might desire. Whatever is the highest level of pay, the most prestigious, the most honorable (to society), that is what students are normally taught to embrace. However, the Church world does not operate on the same level and same wave length as the world. In the Church, the way UP↑ is DOWN↓. Humility is the key word. Whatever your place in society, if you are a Christian, you are to never look down upon, or devalue people you might have the advantage over. In a hospital, the doctors, surgeons, nurses, could do nothing without all of the support personnel who perform the menial tasks, helping the institution fulfill its healing task. When it comes to the Church, there is absolutely no place for the "I'm better than you" attitude. We are always to think better of others than ourselves. From the highest position in the Church to the lowest plane of service, humility works the same. Christ's Body is ONE unified body. Every member is just as important as any other member.

Now beginning with verse twenty-seven, the apostle emphatically states, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." That is, all the Christians at Corinth, not the more highly regarded, not the seemingly more gifted, but *every single member* of the Christian community, even the slave, is a member in the Body of Christ. *This also includes the bishops, deacons, presbyters, and all Church leadership.* He further explains in the last few verses of this chapter that "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (12:28). It is God who determines every member's function. Not all are apostles. Not all are prophets. Not all are teachers. Neither are all workers of miracles. All do not have the gift of healing. Not all speak with tongues. Not all interpret. It is God who has decided the function of every member.

Understanding exactly what Paul is addressing here may seem to mitigate against what has been stated previously. All nine gifts are distributed to the Body of Christ and every member in particular who has been baptized with the Holy Spirit retains the potential to

be used in any of the nine specific gifts Paul is covering in chapter twelve. Now the apostle seemingly, is saying “not all,” that is not everyone enjoys the totality of giftings of the Spirit, or not everyone has the potential for the nine gifts to operate through them. Follow closely what Paul does say. “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. *Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?*” (12:29-30).

All Christians (especially the Corinthians, if we maintain context) are particular members of the Body of Christ. God gave some of these members to be: apostles, prophets, teachers. After prescribing the leadership functions of the body, God provided miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. After addressing these, Paul asked the series of questions: Are all apostles? And the answer is certainly not. Are all prophets? Again, the answer is negative. Are all teachers? Of course, all within the body could not be teachers, then there would be no one to be taught. Does every member of the body work miracles? No, but that does not mean that the potential is not there. Do all members of the body operate in the gift of healing? Of course not, but that still does not negate the potential for the gift to operate, through whoever in the body the Holy Spirit desires to use. Do all speak with tongues? No, and the answer is more complicated than what appears on the surface. For Paul is not asking here if everyone has received Holy Spirit baptism and spoke in tongues at their initial baptism, or whether or not the individual believer utilizes tongues speaking while praying. What Paul refers to here is whether everyone in the assembly speaks out a message in tongues to be translated and disseminated to all present, and the answer is no. Do all interpret? Again, the answer is no, for in an assembly, when the operation of tongues is manifested and a message is given, not everyone has the ability or gifting to interpret that particular message, else there would be no reason to require silence if no interpreter is present. Remember, all of these nine gifts belong to the Holy Spirit. Members of the Body of Christ who have received Holy Spirit baptism have the potential for either of the nine gifts to operate through them. However, in an assembly meeting, when a message in tongues is given out, not everyone will have the interpretation of the tongues spoken, otherwise, there would be no necessity for the gift, for if everyone had the gift of interpretation at that particular meeting, everyone would already know the interpretation.

Within this context of giftings Paul is *not* attempting to address speaking in tongues as an evidence of the Christian being baptized with the Holy Spirit. Follow the context and you will readily see that he is speaking of giftings *within* or *resident in* the Body of Christ. Within the context of what he is saying here, not everyone in the Church, assembly, meeting, is going to give out a message in tongues (do all speak with tongues?). This question has absolutely nothing to do with the initial gift that Jesus promised to the Church, the baptism with the Holy Spirit and the attendant evidence of speaking in tongues. Not everyone who is in attendance at an assembly of congregated Christians, is going to be able to interpret a message in tongues. This gift of interpretation works through someone who has never heard the language themselves, has never studied the language, but is a gift that the Holy Spirit imparts whereby the gifted person is able to interpret the language or tongue of the message. More is to be said concerning this particular gifting – tongues and interpretation of tongues – as we study chapter fourteen.

In this last verse of chapter twelve, “covet earnestly,” usually interpreted in the imperative mood, could also be rendered according to the indicative mood, “ye do covet earnestly,” (Albert Barnes e-Sword). Further, Barnes adds, “The Syriac renders it, ‘Because you are zealous of the best gifts, I will show to you a more excellent way.’ But there is no valid objection to the common translation in the imperative, and indeed the connection seems to demand it. Grotius renders it, ‘Pray to God that you may receive from him the best, that is, the most useful endowments.’”

More specific to the context, Paul’s injunction, “covet the best gift,” is for the Corinthians to earnestly desire the gift that is best suited for the Body of Christ at the particular need, and not the one that is most spectacular or brings more attention to the person through whom the gift is manifested. Speaking in tongues, producing an intense aura of excitement and mystique, would gain everyone’s attention. It seems the Corinthians all wanted to speak in tongues, and to do it all at the same time, perhaps trying to ramp up the importance of their message by speaking louder than the others. This leads to confusion. There is a more excellent way. Paul leads into this way of excellence and reveals his wisdom concerning such in the next chapter.

An additional thought concerning giftings includes the idea that all the gifts are resident in the Holy Spirit Himself. In addition, all the members of the body are one body, the Body of Christ. Each and

every member who has received Holy Spirit baptism is endowed with the potential for any of the nine giftings to operate through that individual. That is why Paul says “covet earnestly the best gift.” It is the Holy Spirit’s choice as to who manifests the gift, and which gift will operate in each individual Spirit baptized person’s life, as well as the timing of the gifts. What remains most important is for the Body of Spirit-filled believers to be earnestly seeking to be used by the Holy Spirit in any of the nine gifts. Dedication, consecration, availability to the Spirit’s beckon and call are all important factors. Some commentators will note in chapter thirteen that love is the best gift. However, love is not a gift, but is a characteristic, and a fruit of the life in the Spirit. When the Spirit-filled Christian’s life is filled with the Holy Spirit, wholly given to the governance of the fruit of the Spirit, that individual will be constantly seeking for whatever is best for everyone concerned.



**CHAPTER EIGHT**  
**LOVE**  
**Importance, Characteristics, Permanence**

Now, Paul says

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing. Charity suffers long, *and* is kind; charity envies not; charity vaunts not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeks not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; Bears all things, believeth all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Charity never fails: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abides faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity ” (1 Corinthians 13:1-13)

Love’s superiority is seen in three separate topics related to love. They are importance, verses 1-3; characteristics, verses 4-8; and permanence, verses 9-13.

The Importance of Love

In the very beginning of this discourse on “the more excellent way,” the apostle addresses the excitement again of tongues-speaking, the

prominence of prophecy and understanding all mysteries and having all knowledge, having mountain-moving faith, and bestowing all one owns to charity. Without love, that is, unless all of these gifts or actions are motivated by love, they are without value, meaningless, without profit.

From this simple but profound beginning in chapter thirteen, Paul is demonstrating that gifts may operate without this most precious characteristic called love. Because a believer has been Holy Spirit baptized, gifted with one or another of the operations of the Spirit, it does not follow that they are necessarily perfect. Any bona-fide Christian will tell you, even in their own life, it takes time to mature in love, mature in one's walk with the Lord, and there were and still may be a plenitude of errors concerning walking with Christ in the individual's life. We know that the Holy Spirit is perfect, but we are not. By perfect this writer means exactly that. We are human vessels. We may be without sin, walking in the light of God's Word and all of the instruction that we have received from the Lord. However, none of us are perfect in the sense that we will be when we stand face to face with Christ. While on this earthly journey, God has provided giftings to assist our walk, but these giftings operate by faith and as we "walk in the Spirit" so that we do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. We must remain humble and teachable, so that we may learn from the Holy Spirit, to be sensitive to His leadings, pleadings, and direction. God cannot use the arrogant, the stuffed-shirt personality, the "better than you" attitude, in true manifestations of Spiritual giftings.

These giftings listed in chapter twelve were giftings of the Holy Spirit. He is perfect, absolutely perfect. However, these giftings must operate through human vessels that are subject to imperfections. This is why the Corinthians are having such a difficult time. Their former lifestyles, their surroundings of idolatry, the teachings of wisdom from men regarded in their lifetime as the most astute learners and teachers of the time, and necessarily all that is included in their background to increase a feeling or sense of superiority is still implanted in their minds. As far as the gospel is concerned, they are sanctified (1:2), called to be saints (1:2). But their minds have not synchronized with their spirit man. Many misunderstandings, deficiencies, problems are still at work in their lives. Understand here, these misunderstandings, problems, have nothing to do with open sin, necessarily. These are believers who are struggling to walk in step with the Spirit. They abide in a body of flesh, but are renewed in their minds, in their spirits, and are having difficulty determining whether their flesh, their soul or the Holy Spirit is prompting their actions. They are to walk in the Spirit and

not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. (Romans 8:1, 8:4; Galatians 5:16, 5:25). Most probably there are others who are sinful, arrogant, selfish, besides the fornicator addressed in chapter five (5:1-12). The same is true of Christians today. Even though they have been born again, filled with the Holy Spirit, Christians sometimes get out of sync with the Spirit and must repent to remain in close fellowship with the Lord and be used profitably by the Holy Spirit.

All of the operations of the Holy Spirit giftings are also enacted by faith. One could have faith to remove mountains, but still not have charity or love. One could have faith to prophesy, have mountain-moving faith but still be deficient in love. What is the one element of all the giftings that must be present for any of the gifts to operate? The answer is faith. But faith does not reach its highest pinnacle until it is infused with love (13:7).

### The Characteristics of Love

Following his explanation of the importance of love, Paul describes the characteristics of love. First of all, charity or love is long-suffering. That is love puts-up-with others, their actions against us, and with circumstances that do not go our way. Love is kind. Love in action, deals with others in kindness, not in bitterness, roughness, or petulance. Love is not envious. When others around us prosper in various ways, true love is not jealous of them and does not wish to take from others the joy that they have received so that the envious one may have his pleasure fulfilled. Love is not forward. It does not put the wishes of one's own heart in front of the next person in line. Love always seeks the betterment of others over self. Love is not puffed up, proud, boastful, does not brag about itself. Love does not behave itself unseemly but is always a gentleman or a lady, in every situation. Love is never perverse, never out of sync with the situation for its own reward, but is pleasant.

In addition, love is not self-seeking, rather love, seeks for the betterment of those with whom it is involved. Love is not easily provoked. Some people, even Christians, are provoked at the slightest incidents. Not so love, it keeps cool, calm and collected, trusting in the Father of grace, mercy and love. Love does not think evil towards others. In fact, the scriptural and God kind of love, always thinks good towards others, giving them the benefit of the doubt and praying for grace and blessing towards even its enemies. Love does not rejoice in iniquity. When others are caught in

iniquity, or when iniquity abounds, love rather mourns than be glad.

Another significant characteristic of love is rejoicing. However, it is praise for truth. When truth wins out, love is rejoicing. It is not like the kind of rejoicing or praise of children seeking one-up-man-ship, who say “my dog’s better than your dog,” or “my Mom’s got a better job than your mom,” and such like. One of my seminary professors told the class of how his children, while playing with their neighborhood friends, became involved in this boasting of how their fathers were doctors, and such like. Our professor’s children retorted, “our daddy is a doctor, but he is one of those doctor’s that don’t help nobody.”

Love rejoices when truth has the upper hand. Truth usually wins out in the end. Stories have been circulated of someone who committed murder without a trace of evidence left behind to convict them. Some of these guilty who were so overcome with their deed turned themselves in. Others were found out because of diligence on the part of investigators who would not quit. In the end, Truth came to be revealed. Love rejoices when truth wins out.

Finally, love bears all things. That is love puts up with all things, not just some things, but all things. Love believes all things. Love is not looking to be doubtful but operates in belief. Sometimes we are doubtful of everything. But love believes until proven otherwise. On the other side of the coin, without love, there is always a seeking to prove someone guilty until they are proven innocent. Love is hoping right in the middle of chaos. Love is always hoping for the best scenario in every situation. Love endures. Indeed, the scripture here says that love endures all things. That is, in every situation love will endure. Love never fails. Here we see the supernatural, never-ending, faithful love of God. His love within us will never fail. Love will conquer any foe, any circumstance, that the Christian may encounter.

### The Permanence of Love

Prophecies will fail. This is not saying that prophetic utterances provided by the Spirit of God will fail or not come to pass, but there is coming a time when prophecy will have no need for operation. For the same reason tongues will cease. As long as we are in this temporary world the prophetic and tongues with interpretation will have their place. But the time is coming when

we will not need the prophetic or tongues and/or interpretation any longer. Even knowledge shall vanish, “or be lost in the brighter visions of the world to come,” (Barnes, e-Sword). Reasons for these statements are provided beginning at 13:9. Now, we know in part, prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, that which is partial shall be done away. Perfection is when we have passed from this worldly life of imperfections into that glorious world of heavenly perfections.

Paul explains himself, “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things” (13:11). In essence he is saying the Corinthians need to grow up and stop their childish behavior. Children act, speak, and think like children. You Corinthians need to grow up and put away your childish behavior in the operation of spiritual gifts. Then Paul gives reasoning for their need to grow-up in 13:12, “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

At the time Paul wrote these words, and the present time for his readers, he is saying we do not see everything in the spiritual world clearly. It is as if we are looking into a mirror. Looking glasses, what we would call mirrors, in Paul’s world were not made from glass like the ones we have today. Polished brass or some inferior metal was used causing the image to be distorted, not clear, not plain. Paul is saying, at the present time, we don’t see everything as clear as it really is. Spiritually speaking, we are living in the flesh and hindered from seeing the spiritual world plainly. We may catch glimpses of the supernatural, but there is always this veil, this flesh that must be contended with. But the time is coming when we will be face to face with true spiritual reality. Now our understanding is partial, incomplete, and often blurred because of fleshly hindrances. But when perfection comes, that is, when we enter into Heaven’s gates, we shall stand face to face with true spiritual reality.

Now, for the present, three items for our understanding remain. They are faith, hope, and love. Faith, which reaches into the world of impossibilities and brings them to actualities, abides with the Church. Hope, an anchor of the soul, steadfast and sure, guides the Christian into Heaven’s eternal harbor. Then, abides, love. Love is the conquering essence of Spiritual dominion and is the greatest, because when we reach Heaven’s shore, we will be with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, of Whom it is written “God is Love” (1 John 4:8). When we have gained entrance into that

joyous eternity, some say that we will no longer need faith, for we will have gained our victory. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world. Others conjecture that faith remains with us, even in heaven, because we will be continually reaching for victories throughout God's universe. In the same manner, aspirations of the hearts of heaven dwellers to conquer more in God's great creation define hope. In any case, Paul says "now," which could have reference to our existence here in the "now" of earthly life. Now abides or continues, faith, hope, and love. One gifting or characteristic that seems to be unequivocally necessary for here and eternity is love. This may be the reason the apostle declares love as the greatest characteristic of present and eternal existence.

## CHAPTER NINE

### PROPHECY AND TONGUES

In chapter twelve Paul named the nine gifts of the Spirit: word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, prophecy, miracles, healing, discerning of spirits, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. Then in chapter thirteen his discussion pointed up the more excellent way of operating the gifts which is love. Any gift operated without love as its supreme underlying impetus cannot work efficiently. Finally, in this fourteenth chapter, the apostle addresses one of the most outstanding errors in the Corinthian church which was the operation of tongues. Here, the apostle is not concerned with tongues manifested at the time the believer is baptized with the Holy Spirit. Everything Paul addresses concerning “Spirituals,” is in consideration of giftings *after* the believer has received the initial gift. How do we know this to be true? Paul never mentions the initial experience, Holy Spirit baptism. He only concerns himself with answering questions concerning the nine spiritual gifts.

As with other operations of the Spirit, there will be error, not on the part of the Holy Spirit, but because of human frailty and weakness of the flesh. Someone may question whether prophecy in the Old Testament was without error. The answer is certainly. Old Testament prophets of God spoke as the Spirit of God spoke through them, completely without error. Even so, there were false prophets, and there were false prophets whom the Spirit of God used for His own purposes. (Balam; Prophet who lied, 1 Kings 13:13-22; lying prophets, 1 Kings 22:22; 2 Kings 17:13). What then is the difference? In the New Testament, the gifts of the Spirit are provided the Body of Christ for supernatural assistance in carrying out the work of Christ. Old Testament prophecy was divinely superintended so that God’s Word provided by inspiration through the prophet was spoken without error. In the Christian Church that inspiration is not provided. As far as the gifts of the Spirit are concerned, they operate through the anointing that the Holy Spirit provides. It is the same Spirit that spoke in prophecy in the Old Testament, but it is a different order. Jesus Christ, the

prophesied Messiah has come, paid the price for our sins, resurrected, ascended to glory, and sent the Holy Spirit to abide within the Church. His Church is made up of born-again believers. None of the Old Testament prophets or believers experienced this same phenomenon. For them, the Holy Spirit would come upon them, clothe them momentarily to carry out His purposes, but the New Testament Church has been born from above. This *born-again* experience separates believers in the New Testament from believers in the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit abides *in* the New Testament believers. When these believers were born-again and the Holy Spirit came to abide within them, they became spiritual beings, *born-again*, born from above. Holy Spirit anointing is provided to the Church and this anointing is with all believers. However, Jesus provided further gifts and anointings to His Church, which is included in Holy Spirit Baptism. Believers who have received this baptism have the fullness of the Holy Spirit within them, and upon them. This anointing provides the gifts that Paul covers in First Corinthians chapter twelve. According to the Scriptures in First Corinthians, especially, the believer is to flow with the Holy Spirit. All the gifts of the Spirit reside in each Spirit filled believer. However, the Spirit decides which gift(s) will operate, through whom, and the timing. Spirit filled Christians must prepare themselves to be used, to be available, by prayer, fasting, study of God's Word, and walking in obedience to the Holy Spirit. When Spirit-filled believers are *operating by faith under the influence of the Holy Spirit*, their giftings are supernatural, and without error. Human error enters the scene when believers are *not walking in sync* with the Holy Spirit.

### **Detecting Truth from Error**

How then is the Church to detect truth from error? First, the Holy Spirit always works in tandem with the revealed Word of God. Secondly, members of the Body of Christ who are walking in sync with the Holy Spirit, have a witness within themselves and these members collectively understand when there is a spirit of error at work, through the gift of discerning of spirits. In addition, as the writer of 1 John 2:27 says, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." It requires a close walk with the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to *abide in Christ* and remain free from error. When a Spirit-baptized believer fails to walk in sync with the Holy Spirit, Spirit-filled believers say that this person is walking *in the flesh, or according to the flesh*. In essence the erring believer has failed to



stay full of the Spirit in praying, meditating in the Word of God, and obeying the Spirit. This failure on the part of the Spirit-baptized Christian will lead to many errors in behavior and in essence, will allow fleshly appetites, actions, and carnal behaviors to surface. This is one reason the apostle writes, “walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Gal 5:15).

### **Initial Evidence**

In the book of Acts a record of Paul’s conversion and missionary endeavors can be found. We have first of all Saul of Tarsus and his conversion. Afterwards his name is changed to Paul. At his deliverance, when Ananias came to him (9:27), having been instructed by the Lord Jesus, Ananias informs Saul, “Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto you in the way as you came, hath sent me, that you might receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.” Now, in every other instance in the book of Acts where one is said to be “filled with the Holy Ghost,” or “baptized with the Holy Ghost,” the initial experience was characterized by tongues speaking, either expressly or strongly suggested, which signaled the Spirit’s presence. This supernatural sign is the “first or initial” signature that Spirit baptism has occurred. A detailed study of Acts will reveal that one cannot be “filled” with the Spirit until the Holy Spirit first comes upon that individual, because it is a “coming upon” experience. After they are baptized with the Holy Spirit, are filled with the Spirit, they can be refilled (Salvation and Holy Spirit Baptism, Dennis Robinson, Self-Published: Gadsden, AL 2020. Available at [Encounterz.org/download-page](http://Encounterz.org/download-page)). Paul received Holy Spirit baptism with the same evidence as every other instance recorded in scripture. When he was Spirit baptized, he spoke in tongues as the Spirit gave the utterance. This is one phenomenon that does not change throughout scripture.

At this point some will think that they have received Holy Spirit baptism without the initial evidence of speaking in tongues as the Spirit provides utterance. Our point in making these statements concerning initial evidence are well founded. Study the scriptures concerning the “coming upon” baptism that Jesus spoke of, recorded in Luke and Acts. Powerful manifestations of Holy Spirit power and witness have been the experience of countless persons throughout history.

Not long after this author was saved and filled with the Holy Spirit, his pastor joined with another pastor in town to preside over a

funeral of both their acquaintance. This godly pastor, who was not Pentecostal, desired wholeheartedly to be filled with the Holy Spirit. While they conversed at this funeral, he made a statement that he had been baptized with the Holy Spirit. He was asked if he had spoken in tongues when this event happened. His answer was no. My pastor then corrected him concerning his experience. A few days later this brother testified that while he was sleeping, he was dreaming of Spirit baptism. When he awoke, he was speaking in tongues as the Spirit gave the utterance.

Another testimony concerning this gift involves a Baptist pastor who was sincerely seeking the fullness of God's presence and Spirit. Many times, he would be around Pentecostals in worship and would tell God, "I want your Spirit, but I don't want tongues." One day while he was alone, praying to be filled with the Spirit, he could hear a sound afar off of people speaking in tongues. The sound came closer and closer to him until it was immediately above him. Suddenly, he stopped praying and said, "God, I told you about them tongues. I don't want tongues. I want the Holy Spirit baptism."

One night he had a dream. In this dream he was visiting in a local hospital. While in a man's room, he saw himself tell the man that God had sent him to pray for him. When he began to pray, immediately, the pastor was baptized with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in tongues. This dream disturbed him. A few days later, the pastor was in the hospital visiting the man he had seen in the dream. He explained that everything was exactly as he had seen it in the dream. He left the room, ran down the stairs, not waiting for the elevator, went to his car, telling God, no. He did not want tongues. While he sat in his automobile, the Holy Spirit so filled the vehicle that he said it was like liquid love. God asked him, "Do you want my will?" "Yes," he replied, "but I don't want tongues." After a few moments, the Holy Spirit convinced him to return to the room and pray for the patient that he had so indiscreetly abandoned. As he prayed for this man, the pastor was immediately baptized in the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance. This pastor was greatly used of the Lord after this Spirit baptism experience, was able to lead many people in the Baptist church to a full experience of Spirit baptism. After a short time, he had to move into another environment that would accept his calling and experience.

## Paul Deals with Spiritual Giftings at Corinth

Paul, in Corinthians, is not dealing with Holy Spirit baptism, but with the manifestation of the nine gifts of the Spirit which are provided the body of Christ, subsequent to believers being baptized with the Holy Spirit. Proper order and context between the Gospels, the book of Acts and the Epistles must be adhered to. While we are looking here into the first letter to the Corinthians, we must keep our attention focused on epistolary context. And, in this instance, Paul is addressing misunderstandings and mishandlings of gifts that have been provided to the body of Christ, after the fact of Holy Spirit baptism. These giftings originate from the one and selfsame Spirit, and are provided to the body of Christ by that one Spirit.

For the record, there are at least two of the nine gifts mentioned by Paul that definitely cannot work except the candidate is Holy Spirit baptized in the manner this document has specified. They are the gift of tongues and the interpretation of tongues. Without Holy Spirit baptism there are no tongues gifts. Understand, the proclamation made here has nothing to do with learned tongues or languages, which any capable person may be able to understand and practice with proper training. Neither is this statement concerning giftings of the Spirit whereby one may learn to speak or teach and interpret foreign known languages. There is a gift Paul mentions, the gift of tongues, that may enable the believer to speak in foreign languages, never learned by the person who is speaking in the foreign tongue. There is also a gift of tongues whereby the believer is speaking directly to God, which Paul identifies here as “unknown tongues.” If there be no tongues (unknown tongues), there is no necessity for a gift of interpretation of tongues. Bear in mind, what Paul is speaking of here as the gift of tongues, and interpretation of tongues, are supernatural manifestations of the Spirit. If these were naturally occurring tongues, or naturally interpreted manifestations, why would there be the necessity of a gifting from the Spirit? No, these are miraculous manifestations provided the body of Christ by the one and selfsame Holy Spirit that is the third person of the triune Godhead. Furthermore, Paul says in 14:2 “For he that speaks in an *unknown* tongue speaks not unto men, but unto God: for no man understands *him*; howbeit in the spirit he speaks mysteries.” If these tongues giftings were not supernatural, why would Paul say that they are? Note, “no man understands.” Indeed, no man *can* understand *except* the gift of interpretation of tongues is manifested. This writer is aware that the term “unknown” is not supplied in the Greek text of 14:2. It was added by the translators. However, he is also aware that the

word “unknown” supplied by the translators in the KJV was for the benefit of assisting in understanding what the scripture has spoken. Reading further, the text makes the choice for the insertion of the word “unknown” valid. If we read this particular verse without the insertion “unknown,” it would be written in this manner, “For he that speaks in a tongue speaks not unto men, but unto God: for no man understands; howbeit in the spirit he speaks mysteries” (14:2). It is apparent that the insertion “unknown,” in the KJV was correct, and makes for easier reading and understanding, for the text itself informs us that “no man understands” and the one speaking in tongues “speaks not unto men but unto God.” Scripture is plain here. Speaking in tongues is, in the case mentioned in this scripture, spoken unto God and not unto men. It is a language provided by the Holy Spirit, and a language only God understands, unless the message spoken is interpreted by the Holy Spirit provided gift of interpretation. (See David Guzik, e-Sword, on 14:2-3).

### **Paul Deals with Prophecy**

Paul’s priority is for the believer to prophesy. Speaking in tongues automatically provides edification for the one exercising the gift. Instead of an outright dismissal of tongues, in verse five the apostle approves and promotes tongues speaking. “I would that ye all spoke with tongues.” (14:5). However, the superior gift in this discourse is prophecy. And the reason for this is that prophecy provides edification, exhortation, and comfort to the *entire* congregation. One who speaks in tongues *edifies only himself unless he interprets*, so that the understanding and blessing is spread to the congregation, bringing edification to all.

Any Christian who is Spirit-filled, has ever prayed in tongues or practices praying in tongues, knows that praying in unknown tongues builds up or strengthens the inner man. Inner strength arises, faith becomes stronger, and the believer so used, knows that the spirit man has been strengthened (Jude 1:20). If my natural body is hungry it is well within my purview of the situation to have that knowledge. When natural food enters my body, I also know that my body is strengthened. After praying in tongues my spirit man is also strengthened and this fact is recognized, understood by me. (See, [27 Biblical Reasons for Speaking in Tongues](https://derekpress.com/authorpages/27biblicalreasons.html), Flavis L. Burroughs, Sr., C.O.T.R. Ministries Northport, Alabama: 2005. This book is now available through Derek Press, Cleveland, TN. <https://derekpress.com/authorpages/27biblicalreasons.html>)

In verse six a question is offered, “Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?” In other words, unless I speak to you in a language whereby you receive revelation, knowledge, doctrine or prophecy, how are you to be edified? If my communication is in a common language, all who speak that common language are edified. Someone speaking in tongues provided by the Spirit, while gathered in a congregation, is not just to speak unknowable sentences or mysteries. Supreme to the situation is understanding. When the Spirit-filled believer senses the Spirit rising within to speak out a message, there should also be the understanding or sense within their purview of knowledge that the Holy Spirit wants this message spoken and interpreted. If that sense is not present, then the gifted person should speak to themselves and to God, that is, under their breath, so as not to disturb the assembly.

A member who has a message in tongues may know by common knowledge of those present in the assembly, that someone who has been used in the gift of interpretation is present. Knowing this, the member gifted with the message in tongues would most probably speak out the utterance. However, that knowledge is not always available to everyone in the congregation. Operations of the Spirit are prompted by the Holy Spirit and the Spirit knows whether the gift of interpretation is present or not. If the member who senses the Spirit desires to convey a message in tongues and interpretation, is sensitive to the Spirit, that member will sense a strong compulsion to speak out the message. We must remember that the Holy Spirit is the sole impetus for the operations of the Spirit. Sometimes humans are not in sync with the Spirit and may frustrate the Spirit’s moving, by trying to function ahead of the Spirit’s timing or by not cooperating with the Spirit at all.

### **Christ Provided for Spirit Baptized Christianity**

To the uninitiated, those unfamiliar with spiritual manifestations in the church, these teachings concerning tongues and prophecy appear to be unusual and unworthy of attention for the twenty-first century Church. Bear in mind, God’s word is eternal. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). There is no scripture to direct the church away from these manifestations of the nine gifts of the Spirit. These gifts were given to the Body of

Christ to provide supernatural abilities and anointings so that the Church could continue in its operation as an extension of Jesus Christ. Also bear in mind that these directions are given to a church that is Spirit-filled, not believers who have been regenerated only. Many congregations today have no idea what being Spirit-filled entails. These believers may be “born again,” but are inept to judge spiritual matters under discussion here, because they have not been initiated into the supernatural realm of Holy Spirit manifestations.

When a believer is saved, born again, a new experience has occurred. He/she has entered into the realm of the spiritual. If and when that believer is Holy Spirit baptized, they enter into a superior realm. This is not a superiority in position but a superiority in function. To be as concrete in our thinking as possible, let's suppose, when believers are born again, they entered into a brand-new room that has boundaries or walls. When the believer receives Holy Spirit baptism, the experience is as if a door opens in the room, and the believer has moved through the door into another realm, without walls. It's like going from the inside of the house into the outside world. As far as understanding what this writer is attempting to explain, to the uninitiated, those who are not Spirit-baptized, they cannot and never will understand until they have received the experience. You cannot explain to a person born blind what color, shadows, and light involves. It is impossible to explain to one who is deaf from birth what a robin sounds like when it sings; how a trumpet, saxophone, piano, or any other musical instrument sounds. Neither can supernatural operations of the Spirit be successfully explained to someone, Christian or non-Christian, who has not entered into the realm of Spirit-baptized Christianity.

Jesus' disciples had already been born again, renewed in their spirit before Pentecost. Jesus promised an enduement of power at Pentecost, not a new birth experience. So many times, theologians, teachers, and preachers conclude that Pentecost was the birth of the Church. Read John chapter seventeen and discover whether any of the disciples were converted before Pentecost. Pentecost was the “empowerment” of the Church. Pentecost was when the disciples were “endued with power from on high,” just as Jesus promised (Luke 24:49). Jesus did not command His disciples to tarry until they were born again. His commandment is to tarry until they are “endued with power from on high.” It was the resurrection that sealed the salvation transaction, (Luke 24:46-47). Matthew's gospel says nothing about being endued with power. Jesus simply commanded his disciples, “And Jesus came and spake unto them,

saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen,” (Matt. 28:18-29).

After Christ’s resurrection, Mark makes no mention of Holy Spirit baptism, but does speak to power manifestations that would occur when the disciples obeyed Christ’s command. “Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen,” (Mark 16:14-20).

Notice also, the gospel of John includes the born again experience. After appearing to Mary Magdalene, Jesus appeared to the eleven on that same first day of the week. “Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whosoever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.” It is noted here that Jesus breathed upon them making the statement, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” Albert Barnes comments, “His breathing on them was a certain sign or pledge that they would be endowed with the influences of the Holy Spirit;” Then Clarke informs us on this section of scripture, “From this act of our Lord, the influences of the Holy Spirit on the souls of men have been termed his inspiration; from *in*, into, and *spiro*, I breathe. Every word of Christ which is received in the heart by faith comes accompanied

by this Divine breathing; and, without this, there is neither light nor life.” Clarke also states, “Just as Adam was before God breathed the quickening spirit into him, so is every human soul till it receives this inspiration. Nothing is seen, known, discerned, or felt of God, but through this. To every private Christian this is essentially requisite; and no man ever did or ever can preach the Gospel of God, so as to convince and convert sinners, without it.”

Finally, David Guzik recognizes this action of Jesus as a re-creation, “Jesus gives His disciples the *Holy Spirit*, bringing new life and the ability to carry out their mission. Many people see the connection between this breathing on the disciples and when God created man, and breathed the breathe of life in him. This is a work of re-creation, even as God breathed life into the first man. This is where the disciples are born again” (Underline emphasis, mine). This experience was not Pentecost, for that experience of being “endued with power from on high,” is promised to descend upon the disciples as they tarry in Jerusalem. If they had received this power when Jesus breathed on them, why would He command them to tarry in Jerusalem until they be “endued with power from on high?” Some say this breathing upon the disciples was prophetic of what was to come on the Day of Pentecost. Where in this particular scripture is prophecy emphasized? Jesus simply said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” Is that not a command, as was the command to go and preach? When He breathed upon them was that not sufficient to infuse them with the Holy Spirit? In certain scriptural references, Jesus specifically commands the disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they be “endued with power from on high,” not tarry until you are born again (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 5).

### **Return to Discussion of Tongues**

Now, back to our previous discussion of tongues. Paul continues in chapter fourteen in his discussion of prophecy over against tongues. Prophecy as compared to tongues, is better, because edification is readily achieved. Pipes, harps, trumpets and other inanimate objects are used to provide a certain sound, one that is intelligible. So, speaking words into the air, into a congregation without providing understanding for those assembled is vain because the one who speaks becomes a barbarian unto those to whom he speaks. “Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. Wherefore let him that speaks in an *unknown* tongue pray that he may interpret” (14:12-13). Since you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek for excellence. Seek that you may excel in



edifying the church. Do not seek, just to give out a message, just to speak in tongues, so that you appear to be superior to others in the congregation, because the Spirit is using you to provide utterances in tongues. No! If you want to be used in giving out messages in tongues, seek excellence, seek to have ability to interpret what the Spirit is saying through you. Otherwise, there is no edification, except to the one who is manifesting tongues speech, unless an interpreter is present and discloses the message to the congregation. Not only is this a direction to seek understanding to interpret to the congregation, it is also a very strong suggestion for those who pray in tongues, to seek to interpret what the Spirit is saying in their prayers. Speaking in tongues, praying in tongues edifies the spirit man. But, understanding what the individual's spirit is actually praying is a manifest edification.

One error, which Paul has already addressed, is the idea of one or another of the Christians at Corinth who wanted to be superior in displaying their gifting. Speaking in tongues can be misused. Instead of waiting for the Holy Spirit, one may feel energized and promote tongues speech from a purely self-interested motivation. Instead of speaking unto one's self silently, the Corinthian believer wanted to manifest the ability to speak in tongues. No doubt they had received unction or energy in their spirit to speak in tongues, but should have spoken to themselves. Speaking in tongues, is in itself mysterious, dynamic, spiritual, a real attention gainer, and these Corinthians misused the gifting seeking to excel in performance over others, so much so that they were trying to exercise the gift simultaneously. Several are speaking in tongues at the same time. Speaking louder and louder to gain preeminence. This is a show of the flesh and not the Spirit of God. Once the believer has been baptized with the Holy Spirit with evidence of speaking in tongues, there is a phenomenon that has occurred in which the psyche or the spirit of the individual has received a supernatural rearrangement. These giftings are a divine-human event that requires cooperation on the part of the individual synchronizing with the Holy Spirit so the Spirit can use that individual. Experience will bring the yielded disciple of the Lord into an understanding so that there is harmony between the Holy Spirit and the believer.

Old Testament "prophets" would sometimes be guilty of utterances which were not manifestations of the Spirit of God, for there also existed false prophets who could sound and act just like true prophets. (1 Kings 22:1-28). Recognizable differences were whether the prophecies actually occurred and whether the prophet was living holy. Our point here is that spiritual manifestations

require the cooperation of the human in sync with the Spirit of God. For reference, one only need to go to the book of 1 Kings 13:11- 29.

Another situation involving speaking in tongues within the assembly involves the unlearned, or untaught concerning spiritual manifestations. This writer has been present in assemblies where a particular individual spoke in tongues for quite some time. This experience was repeated in several different meetings. It appeared that the individual operating the gift was praying in the Spirit, and this was not a message to be projected to the church. When a manifestation of this sort comes forth, usually, the congregation, unless they are well versed in spiritual matters, and especially if this is a small congregation and one that the pastor is not very keen in spiritual operations, a scenario of this kind could materialize. The person speaking in the situation mentioned above, needed instruction with tender care so as not to disparage spiritual growth. Perhaps some of the members at Corinth were actually praying in the Spirit and not speaking in tongues to provide a message. This operation of tongues ought not to be communicated to the assembly as a message. The prayer closet is where one should seek personal edification. Frankly, every member of the Body of Christ should spend time in prayer edifying the inner man before going to church. In times past, most Pentecostal churches, would gather before the service, men in one place, women in another, and spend time in prayer edifying themselves, and seeking God's favor before entering the Church house for service. For the most part, now-a-days Christians come to the Church house expecting the preacher to preach them happy, get them healed, and have all of their maladies cured. A majority of those who attend have not prepared themselves for worship.

Beginning at 14:14-25, Paul provides practical understanding and instructions for tongues speaking. First of all, at verse 14, "For if I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful." While in devotional prayer, the Spirit-filled believer will at times begin praying in tongues. Paul is saying, when this happens, the spirit of the believer is praying, but the mind is by-passed or is unfruitful. In other words, the mind has nothing to do with the words or syllables that come forth when the human spirit receives utterance from the Holy Spirit to assist in prayer. However, the possibility of understanding is available if one prays for interpretation.

Some modern Pentecostal/Charismatic preachers and/or teachers project an interpretation upon this phenomenon of speaking in tongues that is incorrect. The believer cannot just start speaking some kind of gibberish or series of incoherent syllables and call that speaking in tongues, whether praying, giving out a message or whatever the case. No, for these giftings are prompted by the Holy Spirit. That may be why, in some “spiritual scenarios,” something does not seem to be in order, which may be a manifestation from the flesh or from evil spirits. While the Spirit-filled believer is in prayer, he or she will sense an energy rising from the inner man, which is an unction from the Holy Spirit. Yielding to this unction, allowing the words or syllables to come forth either spoken out loud or speaking to one’s own self, will carry thoughts and desires directly to the throne of God. Such spiritually endowed praying leaves the spirit-man edified but the mental arena without understanding.

It is important that the participant who exercises these tongues gifts wait for the Holy Spirit to energize the exhibition of the gift because it is the Holy Spirit that gives utterance to these gifts. For instance, when the disciple is praying, it is not correct to just begin speaking some sort of gibberish and call that praying in tongues. However, when the Spirit-filled believer is involved in prayer, the spirit-man may sense an energy or utterance coming from within to speak syllables that to our mind might seem illogical. Obeying the Spirit and speaking these syllables produces prayer that is directly communicated to God. Only Spirit-filled believers will be able to relate to this description of praying in the Spirit.

This particular writer has many times experienced praying in tongues while driving down the highway, walking in the grocery store or some other place of business, ministering to persons in the hospital, and while involved in private devotions. It is the Holy Spirit that gives the utterance, but it is the believer who cooperates with the Spirit and speaks forth the syllables coming from within, that is, from the spirit man. My mind may remain unfruitful, that is, I have no comprehension of what the Spirit is saying, but my spirit-man is edified. There is no need to remain void of understanding, however, for the Spiritual gift of interpretation is available. Therefore, one should pray for interpretation.

There are many Pentecostals and Charismatics who *teach* their followers to speak in tongues. Many hyper-evangelists, preachers, teachers, try to invoke speaking in tongues as initial evidence from believers who are in the altar seeking Holy Spirit baptism by

telling them to speak certain syllables, or whatever comes to their mind. You won't find that scenario anywhere in the scriptures. It is the Holy Spirit that prompts and promotes speaking in tongues. That is why, some Pentecostal organizations, like the Church of God headquartered in Cleveland, TN add to their teachings that this Holy Spirit baptism is recognized by the initial evidence of speaking in tongues, "as the Spirit gives the utterance." That is, as opposed to the individual themselves giving the utterance, just blurting out whatever comes to mind, or speaking what some Christian leader dictates. It is the Holy Spirit moving within the individual, prompting, and promoting tongues speech that is genuine. Sometimes Holy Spirit baptism comes in a more reserved manner and sometimes the experience is like water bursting forth from a broken dam. It does not take coercion from any human. What is necessary is for the believer to accept in faith what God has promised. Many times, testimonies of persons who have received Spirit baptism will reveal their stubbornness to receive the Holy Spirit as God would have them receive because they did not appreciate how the manifestation occurred in someone else's life. They are determined that their experience will not duplicate others. No one can dictate to Christ, or to the Holy Spirit how the Spirit is expected to operate through them. Many times, believers are highly excited, highly emotional, extremely expressive, more than likely akin to the manner of the Holy Spirit's infilling the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. Just how, and when, the Spirit fills the believer is at the discretion of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. And, of course, there are believers who are seeking Holy Spirit baptism who have not obeyed the Holy Spirit's gentle urges, or promptings to repent of some sin or make amends. Obedience is the key to receiving (Acts 5:32).

At one time, while this writer was pastoring a church in Alabama, he went to preach a Friday night service for another pastor on the district. During the service, while he was preaching, the Spirit kept drawing his attention to a particular person in the audience. When the service ended, that person came to the preacher and asked questions concerning Holy Spirit baptism. Taking his Bible, the speaker showed the inquirer scriptures relating to the subject in the New Testament and the book of Acts. When he had finished answering all the seeker's questions, laying his hand upon this person's head, he prayed, invoking the Holy Spirit to fall upon the candidate, and immediately, this individual burst forth speaking in tongues as the Holy Spirit gave the utterance.

In a Sunday evening service at the church I was pastoring, we were experiencing an unusual presence of the Holy Spirit. Following the

direction of the Spirit I called one of the older sister's up to the front of the church. She had been a Christian for many years but had not received Holy Spirit baptism. Following the direction of the Spirit, calling upon others to come to assist in praying, this pastor laid his hand upon her head. She immediately was baptized with the Holy Spirit, rejoicing and dancing, speaking in tongues as the Spirit provided utterance.

Readers of this document who have followed old-line Pentecostal services and sometimes "charismatic" services in our modern era, may have heard of instances when the ministry leader, pastor, choir director, or someone in authority in the service called for the congregation to begin praying in tongues. That exercise is not spoken to in any place in the scripture that this writer is aware of. If the Holy Spirit has settled into a worship service filling the environment with expectancy, Christians who are Spirit-filled should already be praying in the Spirit, under their breath, that is in silence, not interrupting the flow of the service. You will not find any place in scripture where anyone directs spiritual manifestations except the Holy Spirit. A message to be given in tongues for interpretation will not occur just because the pastor tells a particular person to speak in tongues. These gifts belong to the Holy Spirit. Neither is the pastor or leader to direct, "Okay! Everyone, pray in tongues." As we expressed earlier, the assembly of Spirit-filled believers should already be praying silently, under their breath, for God's Spirit to have control, thus yielding themselves to openness for His manifestation. For it is the Holy Spirit who gives direction and implementation of the gifts of the Spirit.

There may be incidences where the body of Spirit-filled believers are gathered together for worship, the Spirit is intervening to speak a message to the body, and someone is being prompted by the Spirit, but is not yielding. In a situation like this, all Spirit-filled believers should be aware of what is happening, and be praying for the Holy Spirit to have His way in that particular moment. A word from the spiritual leader may encourage everyone to be sensitive to the Spirit's operation and yield to the Spirit's request. Most of the time in a similar situation, many in the congregation will know someone is supposed to be yielding, and sometimes may even know who is to yield. Usually, if the Holy Spirit is prompting the congregation for a message in tongues to be given, if one will not obey, the Spirit may prompt another. If no one responds, the Spirit is grieved, and Spirit-filled believers readily discern this. A similar scenario also works when a message in tongues has been given and no one seems to be willing to step out by faith and respond to the

urge from the Holy Spirit to interpret. Many times, when the message is interpreted others in the assembly will judge as to whether this is a correct interpretation. Usually, when a message in tongues comes forth, two or three times seriatim, or in a series, there certainly is expected to be an interpretation manifested. (14:27). Some leaders think that this particular scripture limits messages in tongues and interpretation to no more than three occurrences. Unless there is some sense of order, one could understand how the whole assembly could become disoriented and become a mass of confusion if the tongues messages were not regulated. (14:26-33). Holy Spirit operations are always decent and in order.

In reference to speaking in tongues it is also necessary to address incidents where the person who is preaching may speak in tongues or someone within the congregation may speak in tongues giving an “Amen” to what the speaker/preacher is saying. Everyone who is gifted with the Spirit and walking in sync with the Lord will recognize when this occurs. Tongues will come forth, but there is not necessarily a requirement for interpretation, or there may be. Even so, it is a spiritual manifestation that needs to be recognized. It is entirely possible also that the preacher, speaking in tongues, is utilizing his own spirit, either knowingly or unaware, to pray or praise the Lord. Only the context of the service can dictate what is actually occurring.

One minister who is well known to his organization, came to the pulpit to preach, and every time he began to speak, his words came out in unknown tongues. After about three attempts, the Holy Spirit manifested in the congregation and a glorious deluge of the Spirit's presence filled the assembly bringing forth many spiritual births (people being saved) and giftings of the Spirit.

Finally, the context of the service will dictate how the gifts are to be operated. For instance, when the entire congregation is worshipping the Lord in singing and praise, if someone is praising the Lord in tongues, it will be obvious, that they are merely praising the Lord, and not seeking to gain everyone's attention to provide a message in tongues for interpretation. A congregation that is not well versed in this kind of experience may think that everyone is to stop and wait for interpretation. God does not act out of order. When the Spirit has something to say, He is not going to interrupt Himself. If the flow of the service is praise and worship, then praise and worship is what should be happening. This includes praising the Lord in tongues. Usually, when the

Spirit wishes to address a congregation through tongues and interpretation, there will be a unity within the body of believers whereby the Spirit brings a “hush” or quietness into the service. When this happens, everyone who is Spirit-filled and walking in sync with the Lord will perceive a check or sense an awareness of the Spirit’s desire, and will understand what is occurring. It is at these times that interpretation is most important and if everyone is obedient to the Holy Spirit, interpretation will come forth.

### **Problems and Guidelines for the Operation of Tongues**

The possibility of error exists when gifts are in operation. Overly zealous individuals, others who are resistant and fearful that they may make a mistake, could contribute to the issue. Testing the waters, so to speak, is required and stepping out by faith. Even so, there are times when individuals operate in the flesh, that is, from an ulterior motive that stems from carnal thinking. For example, the service has gone as usual with spirited worship in singing and praise. Now it is time for the message from the pastor, evangelist, or whoever is designated to address the congregation. Everyone who is in sync with the service particulars, knows and senses that this is the general trend of the service in mind. However, there may be some in the congregation, who, for whatever reason, think that the service should continue with spiritual manifestations according to their desire. They do not wish to hear what the preacher has to say, or in fact may be secretly embracing a dislike for the designated speaker. Instead, they want a “move of the Spirit.” In order to promote their wish, they continue with the former spiritual atmosphere to shout or speak in tongues to bring attention to themselves, and to direct the service according to their desires. Pentecostal preachers recognize this as a “takeover spirit.” In other words, the person acting under these circumstances desires to control the general tenor of the service. In situations such as described here, it is not just the human spirit that is involved in error, but is an attempt by the devil to utilize unwary, unlearned, individuals, promote their fleshly or carnal interests and subvert or undermine genuine operations of the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes, God will intervene in a service and change the order so that spontaneous praise and worship bursts forth, or messages in tongues and interpretation come forth, or some other spiritual manifestation will occur. Even so, if the Holy Spirit desires to operate in this manner, the person who has been designated speaker, and is for the most part, coming to the pulpit to have charge or order of the service, will have an acute understanding of

the Spirit's operation. At this time the speaker should capitulate and allow for the Holy Spirit to function, encouraging the believers to yield to the Spirit's prompting. Exhibitions of praise, shouting, dancing in the Spirit, running and jumping with joy, and other manifestations may take place including speaking in tongues as individuals praise the Lord. In addition, everyone who is Spirit filled in the congregation, and walking in sync with the Lord, will have an understanding of what is occurring. These manifestations are in submission to the Holy Spirit, decent, and in order.

However, if there is no direction to the person charged with addressing the congregation, and there is no general sense of the Spirit directing an operation of the gifts apparent to the congregation, carnal displays of supposed spiritual operations are out of order. Everything God does is decent and in order. Sometimes members of the congregation will be out of order with the spirit of the service and should contain themselves or remove themselves so as not to disturb the service. Sometimes the ruling clergy member, perhaps the person in control of the floor, or the person scheduled to speak, will be out of sync with the Spirit and will not recognize the Spirit's intentions. In any case, all Spirit-baptized Christians in attendance should be filled with the Spirit, re-filled or what we usually term as "prayed up" before the service begins. Marching to that guideline would prevent many errors and promote true spiritual worship.

What would be most beneficial for Spirit-filled worship services is for all who are present to be walking in sync with the Lord, to be prayed up, and filled to the brim and over-flowing with the presence of God. This preacher has been in meetings where the presence and power of God was so prominent, so prevalent, that anyone would be fearful of God's awesome convicting power. Gifts of the Spirit were in operation and God was glorified with the results that transpired. However, he has also been in services where God's presence was not so manifest, believers who were not so dedicated were trying to control the service with spiritual manifestations that were not appropriate, and many in the congregation could be swayed by what they considered to be a "move of God" either because they were not pure before God or unlearned in spiritual manifestations. Any Pentecostal pastor, unless he was pastoring a well-seasoned congregation, has most probably had the same kind of experiences. Remember chapter thirteen of 1 Corinthians here. Everything is to be done in love, even correction when needed. Leaders, pastors, evangelists, preachers, teachers, must walk in love, be controlled by love, and filled to the brim with the Holy Spirit if they expect to have any



success. Members of the body of Christ, members of the church, do not all have the same opportunity for development in the spiritual arena. That is one reason for inconsistency. Many of the Pentecostal churches, especially larger congregations, appear to place a damper upon spiritual operations and either operate in opposition to scriptural teaching, or suppress any operation of spiritual gifts in fear of error. Smaller congregations sometimes contend with carnal and fleshly manifestations of immature believers. Teaching is desperately needed. We must not grieve the Holy Spirit and prevent His leadership, but continue instant in prayer, remain filled with the Spirit, and anchored in God's Word.

Because genuine spiritual manifestations are edifying, it is often the desire of members to have powerful Holy Spirit intervention in every service. Being a Pentecostal preacher for almost fifty years, I must confess that my desire would be that in every service Holy Spirit manifestation was present. In reality, if that were the case, every service would have to be just a little more supernatural or ecstatic than the previous. As humans, we get used to situations too easily. Then it takes a higher or more intense intervention to awaken the congregation. Having pastored many years, I am fully aware that every service is different. However, church members need to be fed the Word of God, to grow in grace, to receive teaching and instruction because we do not walk in the clouds every day. We face the reality of living in this world and must learn to trust and follow God when we are shouting and when we are grieving, when we are on the mountain of high spiritual experience and when we are in the valley of depression of seemingly walking alone. God knows where we are and if we sincerely seek His face, He will not leave us comfortless, but will manifest His presence in some distinct way every time we come together for worship. This manifestation may not be the same for every person. He may minister to each one in a different manner. Or, the Spirit may manifest Himself in a distinct way that everyone in the congregation will discern and recognize His presence. All Holy Spirit giftings and manifestations belong to the Holy Spirit. We need to pray for His presence, follow His leadership, and obey His commands.

## **CHAPTER TEN**

### **THOUGHTS ON RESURRECTION**

After all of the admonitions and corrections the apostle has addressed throughout the letter to the Corinthians up to and through chapter fourteen, he now offers thoughts on the resurrection. When the train of thought is followed throughout this document, it appears that a crescendo effect in Paul's writing has brought us to this place of supreme importance. In the manner of introducing this subject, Paul directs his thought by saying, "moreover." Robinson says, "In addition to what I have said, or in that which I am now about to say, I make known the main and leading truth of the gospel." Here δε (de), in this instance, the Greek rendition "moreover," serves to introduce another topic that was not properly a continuation of what he had said, but which pertained to the same general subject, and which was deemed of great importance. (Robinson, e-Sword and Barnes, e-Sword).

Some, at Corinth argued concerning the validity of (15:12-28) the resurrection. Because of the disputations it was necessary for Paul to address this most important aspect of the Gospel message. For, except there be a resurrection from the dead, Paul's preaching is in vain; believer's acceptance of Christ and following thereafter, are all in vain. For in this we are of all men most miserable, if there be no resurrection to a superior life. Paul covers the resurrection of Christ in this chapter in such a way that his discussion can be divided into several headings: Resurrection of Christ According to the Scriptures, 15:1-11; Resurrection of the Dead, 15:12-28; The Resurrection Body Discussed, 15:35-49; Mystery Surrounding the Resurrection, 15:50-58.

#### **Resurrection of Christ According to the Scriptures**

1Co 15:1-11 "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according

to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether *it were* I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed “

Christ died, was buried, rose again the third day, according to the scriptures. Christ's sufferings and resurrection were all prophesied in the Old Testament. Scripture, such as Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, Psalm 16:10, Acts 2:31 and multitudes of other scriptures testify to Christ's death by crucifixion, burial in a borrowed grave, and resurrection.

Witnesses also confirm the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Cephas (or Peter); the Twelve (that is the Twelve, as they were called, but at this time without Judas present, for he had gone to his own reward); and five hundred brethren at once are said to have seen Jesus, which mitigates against any doubt of His having resurrected. Christ appeared to James and to all of the apostles, except Thomas. At another time Thomas being present, Christ asked Thomas to put his hands into the wounds in his side. Last of all, but not least, Christ appeared to Paul himself, as one born out of due time while the unbelieving Saul was on the road to Damascus to carry out a seek-and-imprison mission against believers. When Jesus Christ appeared to him, calling him to apostleship, his name was changed to Paul and he became the great apostle who provided at least thirteen of the New Testament epistles, namely: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Some scholars think he also wrote Hebrews.

### **Resurrection of the Dead**

In our discussion of the resurrection of the dead, let us look through 1 Co 15:12-34. Paul says, “Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain.” Paul continues, “Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified

of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith *is* vain; ye are yet in your sins." Not only are you still in your sins but, all "which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished." Now Paul profoundly states, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." However, Paul states emphatically, "now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Then, Paul says the end will come, "when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." Paul's triumphant proclamation states, "The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him." When all things have been submitted unto Christ, "then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." If this is not true, "what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?" In addition to what Paul is saying here he asks "why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." Then Paul proffers this question, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?" So, if the dead rise not, if there is no resurrection of the dead, "let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." Then he warns the Corinthians, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak *this* to your shame."

Now the great apostle is questioning the Corinthians, that if Christ is preached that He rose from the dead, why do some say there is no resurrection of the dead? Here is another error, a problem, that Paul has to address. Paul wonders if they do not understand that if there is no resurrection – Christ did not raise. And if Christ is not raised from the dead, Paul says, our preaching and your faith is vain. If there is no resurrection, then you are still in your sins. Not only are you in your sins but Christians who died have perished, and as Paul emphasizes, if our hope is only in this life, we are of all men most miserable.

BUT Christ IS risen – Christ is the first fruits from the dead. It was by man that death came. So, it is also that by man also came the resurrection. For, – as in Adam all die – even so – in Christ shall all be made alive -- every man in his own order: Christ, the first fruits – Afterwards, they that are Christ’s at His coming.

THEN – the end comes. When? At the time He has delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; WHEN he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power – FOR – He must reign – UNTIL – Until He has put all enemies under his feet.

THE LAST ENEMY that shall be destroyed is DEATH.

FOR – He has put all things under his feet, the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death

FOR – He hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under him.

AND – When all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

At verse 29 through 31, unusual statements arise. Paul asks the question, 1Co 15:29 “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all?” If there is no resurrection, why is there a baptism for the dead? Many have supposed various situations which may have evoked this question by the apostle. In this writer’s opinion, the apostle is simply asking why we baptize if the dead are not raised? What does baptism signify? Water baptism, signifies one has been crucified with Christ. That is, the believer has been crucified with Christ, buried with Him in baptism (into a watery grave) and resurrected to newness of life when the believer is raised up out of the water. If the dead rise not, why do we Christians teach that they do raise from the dead by baptizing believers in water? In this writer’s opinion this seems to be all that Paul references here.

Then Paul asks, “why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?” (1 Cor. 15:30-32). Paul seems to be saying here that his life is in jeopardy at all times. He is at the point of death daily. Dangers surround him everywhere he goes preaching the Gospel. He says that he fought with beasts at Ephesus. Acts 19:1-41 probably describes the contentions he was

confronted with in that city. So, if there is no resurrection of the dead, why would Paul continue in his preaching deliverance and salvation through Christ? What would be the advantage?

Wherefore Paul says, “let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die.” In other words, if there is no resurrection, there is no hope. It is certain that we are going to die. If there is no hope, and we are going to die, we should just enjoy everything the world has to offer while we are here and have the possibility to partake and enjoy it. What a miserable thought that all we have is in this life. It seems like some want to live as if this world was all that mattered. However, when you reflect upon what exists in this world, it doesn't take long to realize that it all turns to ashes in a moment. Thank God there is a future life for those who believe in Christ, for those who have been born from above, for those who are looking for His appearing.

### **The Resurrection Body Discussed**

1Co 15:35-49 “But some *man* will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? *Thou* fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other *grain*: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh *is* not the same flesh: but *there is* one *kind of* flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, *and* another of birds. *There are* also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial *is* one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial *is* another. *There is* one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for *one* star differeth from *another* star in glory. So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit. The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven. As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

Of what will the resurrection body consist? How are the dead raised up? What will their body resemble? This is a foolish question, according to Paul (15:36).

When you sow seed – it must die. After the seed is planted in the ground it deteriorates and from it springs forth new life. Then when it appears (when the plant birthed from the seed appears) the new growth will not be the same body that was sown. For instance, you plant a kernel of corn in the ground. What comes up is a plant that grows tall and has ears of corn on it. Each cob within the ear has numerous kernels of corn. For God has given the seed of corn a body as it pleases Him. God also gives to every seed his own body. No two seeds are identical. Peanuts differ from pecans. Orange seeds and pumpkin seeds are not the same. Peanuts grow on vines with the edible seed underground. Pecans and oranges grow on trees. One is a nut and the other a fruit. Pumpkins grow from another kind of plant with the fruit lying on the ground. By the same token, flesh is different. For instance, flesh of men, beasts, fishes, birds, are all flesh, but not the same flesh. There are heavenly bodies, celestial, and terrestrial. But the glory of sun, moon, stars, and the various planets are all different. Even one star differs from another in glory.

SO is the resurrection of the dead. The body (as we now know the human body) is sown in corruption/raised in incorruption (in a form like unto Christ's own glorious body). We bury dead corpses. They are sown in dishonor--raised in glory; sown in weakness--raised in power; sown a natural body--raised a spiritual body.

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a *living soul*; the last Adam was made a *quickening spirit* or a living spirit.

Howbeit that was not *first* which is spiritual, but that *which is natural* (first came the natural body); and afterward that which is spiritual (at the resurrection will be the spiritual).

The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven.

As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: Adam was of the earth, so all men after him are also of the earth. That is all men after Adam are flesh and blood. By the same token, as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. Christ, the resurrected Savior, is the first of a new creation. Jesus Christ was the first person to be raised from the dead to live eternally. Even so, all who are in Christ, all who are saved, will also be resurrected

with a glorious body made like unto His glorious body. For as Paul says, “as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

### **Mystery Surrounding the Resurrection**

1 Cor 15:50-58 “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

Now this I say – brethren – (or moreover, brethren) – I say, *flesh* and *blood* cannot inherit the kingdom of God - That is, *flesh* receives its life because of the life-giving blood that courses through its veins. After the flesh has lost its power to survive, it perishes and cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Instead, it deteriorates and returns to the dust of the earth. Life is in the blood. All of the life-giving nutrients that the body needs for sustenance, oxygen, food and nutrients, is supplied by the red blood that flows through the body with every heart-beat. When the body digresses at death, the blood in its veins and arteries ceases to flow or provide any life-giving nutrients. It is corruptible. Corruption does not put on incorruption. The whole body decomposes because there is no more life in it. But, the resurrected body, though it will be a body of flesh, does not contain blood, *but a life-giving Spirit*.

#### Mystery:

We shall not all sleep, that is, not everyone is going to die. Some will be changed when the rapture of the Church occurs. But we shall all be changed. Not only will those who are alive and remain at the rapture be changed, but all those who died in Christ will also be changed.

IN A MOMENT – in the twinkling of an eye. That is literally, “in a jerk” or in an instant, when the last trump sounds, we shall be changed.



FOR – the trumpet shall sound – the dead shall be raised incorruptible – and we shall be changed

Why the Change?

FOR – this corruptible must put on incorruption. This mortal must put on immortality. The change must take place wherein the mortal flesh becomes immortal. This is the moment when we receive that resurrection body which is made like unto Christ's immortal body, a spiritual body. In other words, our flesh which has been raised from the grave or transformed in a moment while we are yet alive, shall be made a spiritual body wherein the life-giving Spirit of God courses throughout all its flesh making it live eternally. When we existed on earth the blood gave the body life. Now it is the "life-giving Spirit of God" which quickens the body and makes it live.

SO – WHEN – this corruptible shall have put on incorruption – WHEN this mortal shall have put on immortality – THEN – shall be brought to pass the saying that is written "Death is swallowed up in victory."

It will be a matter of REJOICING – O death – where is your sting? Death's sting is SIN – its strength is the LAW -- but sin has been eradicated – sin's sting has been annihilated for there is no law against the body of Christ. For those who have been born again walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh.

O grave – where is your victory? At the resurrection, death and the grave can no longer hold the physical remains of the Christian. In a moment, the transformation will occur and the grave's long held victory will be over.

THANKS BE TO GOD – Which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ

THEREFORE – my beloved brethren – be ye steadfast, un-moveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord – FORASMUCH as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

THEREFORE, in light of all that the apostle has said, and because what he has spoken is God's truth to us, Paul admonishes us:

My beloved brethren, (that is all of us who are in Christ) be ye

steadfast. Be ye un-moveable. Be always, abounding in the work of the Lord. Because you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. God is not going to let us down. He will not allow us to lose. We can trust the Lord to keep His word.

What a glorious thought to end this chapter on Resurrection. Considering all that Paul has said we are reminded to be steadfast, firm and un-moveable or not to be moved from our place and to be always abounding, to be in affluence and super-abound in the work of the Lord. Forasmuch as you know – you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.  
Romans 8:28.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### FINAL WORDS FROM CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Three more times before the epistle ends Paul will use the prominent attention getting conjunction “Now.” First in 16:1 he says “Now concerning the collection for the saints.” Then at 16:5 Paul reveals his travel plans beginning with “Now I will come unto you when I shall pass through Macedonia.” And finally, at 16:10, regarding admonitions for Timothy when he comes to the Corinthians. “Now, if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear.”

In 16:1 our apostle is referring to the collection for the saints at Jerusalem. When Paul and Barnabas had traveled to Jerusalem concerning the issue of whether the Gentiles had to maintain Jewish regulations of circumcision, they were admonished to remember the poor. Galatians 2:9-10, “And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.” Since that time Paul has busied himself with a collection from his converts to minister to the poor in Jerusalem.

Then in 16:5 Paul spells out his travel plans. He is planning to pass through Macedonia and, at that time, will come again to the Corinthians. Originally Paul had planned to go to Corinth on his way to Macedonia. Why he had changed his mind is not readily known. In any case he plans to winter at Corinth, after which, they will have opportunity to conduct him on his way.

Finally, in 16:10 admonitions regarding Timothy when he comes to the Corinthians is the subject. Some scholars believe that Paul had sent Timothy on his way to visit several churches including Corinth. Paul seems to be questioning in his own mind whether Timothy will make it to Corinth. In case he does, he offers this admonition, “May he be with you without fear.” Because of his youth, Paul thinks that Timothy may feel embarrassed among the rich, the frivolous, and the outstanding persons at Corinth. So, Paul

asks the Corinthians (especially the leaders) to receive Timothy, and not embarrass him. This injunction might also have to do with powerful false teachers, who would wish to intimidate him. Therefore, Paul asks the church to sustain Timothy in his attempts to defend the truth.

From 16:12-18 Paul provides some final instructions. Concerning Apollos, a true brother and one who labored with Paul, for we see him as a celebrated leader in 3:4. Here Paul says, “I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time” (16:12). For some reason convenience did not approve Apollos venturing into Corinth with the brethren. Who might the “brethren” include, and what might the inconvenience be for Apollos? The “brethren” were probably the messengers who had carried the Corinthian letter back to the congregation. Paul wanted Apollos to accompany them. But he had reason not to comply. We may only speculate as to why Apollos did not return when Paul invited him. Perhaps because of the dissensions that existed in Corinth, especially concerning the attitudes of superiority toward their teachers, Apollos was disinterested in returning at that time, and would await a more convenient time, when Paul’s teaching had taken effect so that the Corinthians, aware of their faults, had repented and embraced Paul’s corrections.

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity,” (1 Cor 16:13). Albert Barnes, on the thought “watch ye” says, “They were to watch lest their souls should be ruined, and their salvation endangered; lest the enemies of the truth and of holiness should steal silently upon them, and surprise them” (Barnes, e-Sword). They were to be firm, unyielding, and maintain the faith, in spite of “all the arts, insinuations, and teachings of seducers and the friends of false doctrine” (Barnes, e-Sword). In addition, they were to be strong. Barnes says the Greek term used here ἀνδρίζεσθε (andrizesthe) means, “to render one manly or brave; to show oneself a man; that is, not to be a coward, or timid, or alarmed at enemies, but to be bold and brave (Barnes, e-Sword).

Then Paul is entreating the Corinthians to submit themselves unto men like Stephanas and everyone that helps and labors with Paul in the ministry. He reminds them of their knowledge of the house of Stephanas, that his household was the first fruits of Achaia and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry. Here appears an odd

word for our time. When we think of addiction, we think of some vile *habit* – cigarettes, tobacco, drugs – that a person is devoted or sold out to. If we transfer those ideas of *addiction* or *habit* to ministry, we may determine that Stephanas and his household were devoted, sold out, to the *service* of Christians. Their devotion included *aiding the ministry, showing hospitality, providing for the needs* of Christian workers, and by *attending* and *aiding* the *apostles* in their journeys.

Paul says further that he is glad at the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on part of the Corinthians, these have supplied, or they have refreshed Paul's spirit, as well as the spirits of the Corinthians. Speculations of some commentators have these three as "they which are of the household of Chloe." Paul admonishes the believers at Corinth to acknowledge them, respect them, and those that are like them. Paul had baptized the household of Stephanas, the first of his converts in the region of Achaia. Not much is offered concerning Achaicus except he was a Christian of Corinth and with Fortunatus bore Paul's first epistle to that Church. Paul commends these brethren to the Church and applauds their personal assistance to him.

From verse nineteen through the end, Paul sends greetings, not only from himself but also the churches of Asia, Priscilla and Aquilla and the church which meets in their house. Then he closes the letter with a salutation from all the brethren. These personalities are aware that Paul is sending this communication to the Corinthians and since they know them, want to add their greetings to the letter. It's kind of like, someone of our acquaintance that we were involved with in a ministry expedition of some sort, knows that we are sending a letter of instruction back to the ministry participants, and everyone wants to send a greeting to their beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Paul's final words: 1Co 16:21-24, "The salutation of *me* Paul with mine own hand. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. My love *be* with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Notice here Paul notes that this salutation is from his own hand. He has used an amanuensis to write down the words, but notes the salutation is from him, personally.

Then, there is a pronouncement, “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.” Concerning this sentence Albert Barnes comments, “This is a most solemn and affecting close of the whole epistle. It was designed to direct them to the great and essential matter of religion, the love of the Lord Jesus; and was intended, doubtless, to turn away their minds from the subjects which had agitated them, the disputes and dissensions which had rent the church into factions, to the great inquiry whether they truly loved the Saviour. It is implied that there was danger, in their disputes and strifes about minor matters, of neglecting the love of the Lord Jesus, or of substituting attachment to a party in the place of that love to the Saviour which alone could be connected with eternal life.”

Paul adds, “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.”  
Then, “My love be with ye all in Christ Jesus. Amen”



## End Notes

1. 'Now.' This attention getting term, from the Greek δε (de), appears approximately 31 times in this same kind of context.:

### References:

1:10 “**Now** I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

1:12 “**Now** this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.”

3:8 “**Now** he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.”

3:12 “**Now** if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;”

4:7 “For who maketh thee to differ *from another?* and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? **now** if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it?*”

4:8 “**Now** ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.”

4:18 “**Now** some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.”

5:11 ”But **now** I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.



6:7 “**Now** therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves to be defrauded?*”

6:13 “Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. **Now** the body *is* not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.”

7:1 “**Now** concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: *It is good for a man not to touch a woman.*”

7:25 “**Now** concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.”

8:1 “**Now** as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.”

9:25 “And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. **Now** they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.”

10:6 “**Now** these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.”

10:11 “**Now** all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. “

11:2 “**Now** I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered *them* to you.”

11:17 “**Now** in this that I declare *unto you* I praise *you* not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.”

12:1 “**Now** concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.”

12:4 “**Now** there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.”

12:18 “But **now** hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.”

12:20 “But **now** *are they* many members, yet but one body.”

12:27 “**Now** ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

14:6 “**Now**, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?”

15:12 “**Now** if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?”

15:50 “**Now** this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.”

16:1 “**Now** concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.”

16:5 “**Now** I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia.”

16:10 “**Now** if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also *do*.”

2. From page 20 with reference to “Know ye not.” Paul uses this term “know ye not?” seven times or similar “do ye not know?” twice in these nine verses. Two-thirds of the references appear in chapter six alone.

References:

3:16 “**Know ye not** that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

5:6 “Your glorying *is* not good. **Know ye not** that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?”

6:2 “**Do ye not know** that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?”

6:3 “**Know ye not** that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?”

6:9 “**Know ye not** that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind

6:15 “**Know ye not** that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make *them* the members of an harlot? God forbid”

6:16 “What? **know ye not** that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh”.

6:19 “What? **know ye not** that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”

9:13 “**Do ye not know** that they which minister about holy things live *of the things* of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?”

9:24 “**Know ye not** that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.”



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