**One Body, One Spirit**

*1 Corinthians 12, 13, 14*

**Introduction**

1. The context of 1 Corinthians 12-14 is spiritual gifts.
2. We often go to 1 Corinthians 13 to illustrate the fact that spiritual gifts have ceased (**cf. 13:8-10**). We use it to discuss the need for love, and how it works (**cf. 13:1-8**). But what are the problems Paul is addressing here? 🡪
3. There was an obvious problem with the Corinthians associating spiritual gifts in some way with the pagan identification with idol worship (**cf. 12:1-3**).
   1. Paul makes the point that the spiritual gifts aren’t the same as whatever occurred with idol worship.
   2. The Holy Spirit has authority and therefore only speaks one thing. Therefore, the pagan phenomena which occurred (whatever it was) was not to be identified as spiritual gifts.
4. **The most applicable problem he addressed had to do with a more generic human problem.**
   1. **The Corinthians abused spiritual gifts and thus caused division.**
   2. **They didn’t understand the proper use of spiritual gifts.**
   3. **They missed the point about their relationship in Christ, and what it promoted.**
5. **The following lesson seeks to establish the principles Paul establishes in the text. Although spiritual gifts do not exist today, these things were written for our learning as well. 🡪**
6. Different Gifts, Same Spirit
7. Origin of Gifts.

* **(12:4-11)** – The spiritual gifts differed in what they did. However, their end was the same.
  + **(12:27-30)** – Not all were able to do the same thing, because not all were appointed to the same thing.
* Paul continues to emphasize the origin of the gifts for a reason. The gifts all come from the one Spirit – the Holy Spirit. His redemptive work includes the bringing of truth – **John 16:12-15**
  + **The spiritual gifts were different, but had a common collective origin. Thus, their purpose was the same, despite the differences in their specific actions.** 🡪

1. Purpose in receiving gifts.

* **If the HS’s redemptive work is through the revelation of the entire truth, then it is only logical that gifts given via the Spirit work to the same end 🡪**
* **(12:7)** – The purpose of the Spiritual gifts was to profit not only the one who received it, but of others as well. **The ESV says, *“To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (v. 7)***
  + ***How could one person’s gift profit another? 🡪***
    - (**13:8-12**) – The apostle Paul, in explaining the need for love (which we’ll get to), suggests that love will continue but gifts will cease. **Why? 🡪**
      * ***They are parts to a whole. When the perfect comes, or that which is complete, there will be fulfillment of their purpose.***
      * Knowledge – to understand information.
        + This wasn’t regular knowledge – it was a spiritual gift. (Miraculous knowledge.)
        + They couldn’t know it without it being given in this way.
      * Tongues – language that carries with it meaning (so another form of information). **(cf. 14:10).**
        + Again this is miraculous.
      * Prophecy – revelation of God’s will. (more information)
        + Prophets told the future, but their primary purpose was being spokesmen of God.
        + God spoke His will through them.
      * These were PARTS of God’s WHOLE revelation!
        + **(13:11) – Paul uses a metaphor to show Spiritual gifts were for the infancy of the church in God’s revelation.**
        + **(13:12) – Having God’s revelation in bits and pieces was like looking in a cloudy mirror (ancient mirrors weren’t as clear). But when we receive the full revelation it’s as clear as if we were looking at ourselves face to face.**
* **The purpose of spiritual gifts was for the edification of the church. This agrees with Paul’s statement, *“for the profit of all.”* 🡪**

1. Edification **(construction; build up)**

* **(12:31)** – Desire the best gifts. This suggests that some gifts, although all were profitable, were more profitable than others. Why? 🡪
* **(14:1-5)** – Prophecy needs no interpreter. A tongue speaker may be speaking in a language that someone does not know **(cf. 14:11 – If he can’t understand the language, and does not have an interpreter, it doesn’t profit him.)**
* **This all follows the same concept of a system of information – the will of God!**
* **Edification is not without understanding! – (14:12-20).**
  + The church is being influenced by the pagan-like worship of the 21st century.
  + This worship is comprised of upbeat music, entertainment, emotions, and participation in secular activities such as sports and games.
  + This is being labeled as edification.
  + ***God says that edification comes from hearing and understanding His word. This often provokes emotion, and should. However, we have emotion because we are edified. We are not edified by simply feeling a certain way, i.e. having emotion.***
  + **When we say we were edified because we went to a singing what do we mean? Did the songs convict us? Inform us? Encourage us by their message? Or were we simply moved by the melody?**
    - ***“teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”* (Colossians 3:16).**
  + **Were we edified by a gospel meeting because of the message preached? Or simply because we saw some friends we haven’t seen in some time? Or because afterward we were able to have fun with people we know?**
  + **Resting edification on the foundation of human emotion is extremely dangerous.**
    - **Emotions change constantly, but God’s word does not.**
    - **We can be lifted up by God’s truth at any point in time.**
  + ***So many fall away from the truth because they just don’t get it. It isn’t about emotion, but about the information God has given us about His will for us!***
* The whole purpose of spiritual gifts was for those who had them to use them to benefit the church – ***“Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel” (14:12).***
  + ***We want our actions to be beneficial to others!***
  + ***This is possible when we understand our commonality with each other, and treat each other accordingly***. 🡪

1. Unity in the Spirit
2. One baptism into one Body.

* **(12:12-14)** – The one baptism and one body are interrelated. In order to be a part of the one body you must partake in the one baptism. What baptism?
  + **Some say HS baptism because of the context of spiritual gifts**.
  + **This is inaccurate**. 🡪
    - **HS baptism occurred twice in scripture –** **Acts 1:4-5; 2:4** (Apostles); **Acts 10:44-46** (Cornelius’ household – gentiles)
      * **Denotes the gospel being brought to the Jews and Gentiles both.**
      * **Notice 10:47-48 – They were baptized with water afterward.** 
        + **The one baptism that all must partake in is water baptism.**
* **When this happens you are added to the one body – This one body must be *“endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”* (Ephesians 4:3).**
  + **Logically, to make this point Paul uses a metaphor of the human body to illustrate the point of unity. 🡪**

1. Unity in the Body.

* **(12:15-19)** – Although your gift may SEEM less significant it is not.
  + **A common problem with members of the church is low self-esteem and high maintenance.**
  + **Paul admonishes such with these verses.**
  + **Don’t fool yourself by thinking you are being humble when you say you are not needed at the assembly.**
  + **When you show up and participate, you edify others and are a significant, and important member of the whole body!**
    - **To look down on yourself causes neglect of the rest of the members!**
* **(12:20-26)** – Although your gift or role may SEEM by some to be more significant, don’t grow haughty.
  + **All parts of the body are needed.**
  + **It is not Christ like to look down on someone else.**
  + **Those who spoke in tongues thought they were the best, when in reality Paul praised the gift of prophecy! ALL PARTS ARE NEEDED!**
  + **We must *“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” (Philippians 2:3).***
* ***If we have the proper mindset we will be able to act properly. 🡪***

1. Love is key

* **(13:1-8a**) – Elsewhere, Paul describes love as ***“the bond of perfection”* (Colossians 3:14).**
  + Love transcendent and preeminent commandment.
  + It “never fails” because it is a matter of choice, not chance.
  + No matter the circumstances we can always love one another, and in fact we are commanded to.
  + Paul’s inspired description of love promotes action, not passivism.
    - It promotes selflessness, and sees the value in others.
  + In all we do we are to love. The body requires such to function.

**Conclusion**

1. The body is one unit composed of many members.
2. We are to recognize our responsibilities as being members of the body.
3. We must seek to constantly take advantage of opportunities to ***“stir up love and good works”* (Hebrews 10:24)**.
4. God’s elect have the privilege of being a part of a system – multitude of working parts functioning together in unity to accomplish the common goal of glorifying God.
5. We must act as such!