

1 Corinthians

Understanding Spiritual Gifts

1 Cor. 12

Paul begins this chapter, as he did chapters 7, 8, and later 16, with the words, "Now concerning...". Paul is addressing questions about Spiritual Gifts. The next three chapters illustrate the misunderstanding that the Corinthians had about Spiritual Gifts. An individualistic attitude, pride and jealousy had turned spiritual gifts from being a great benefit to the church to become a source of division.

Chapter 12	Numeration of Gifts	9 gifts listed (v. 8-10)
Chapter 13	Duration of Gifts	3 gifts listed (v. 8)
Chapter 14	Regulation of Gifts	2 gifts listed

A. Before we look at this chapter a couple of thoughts about Spiritual Gifts need to be studied

1. What are Spiritual Gifts? And, How did Christians get Spiritual Gifts?

The word "gifts" comes from the Greek word "Charisma."

- Spiritual Gifts are not talents or natural abilities
- They are "given" (12:7,8) or "distributed" (12:11) by the Holy Spirit as He wills
- These "spiritual gifts" were supernatural or miraculous powers that allowed the Christians to know, teach or heal.

Having these Spiritual Gifts did not make the Corinthians spiritual. Remember they were "carnal" (3:1-3); "divided" (1:11); suing each other (6:1-9); and abusing the Lord's Supper (11:17-34).

- Spiritual Gifts were given by the Holy Spirit through the apostles hands
Acts 8:14-17; 19:1-6

2. What was the purpose of Spiritual Gifts?

- Confirm the word of God (Acts 2:22; Mk 16:15-18; Heb 2:2-4)
- Edification of the church (1 Cor 12:7 'for the common good'; 14:12,26)

Spiritual gifts were never given as a 'sign' of salvation.

Word of Wisdom (v. 8):
Word of Knowledge (v. 8):
Faith (v. 9):
Gifts of healing (v. 9):
Effecting of miracles (v. 10):
Prophecy (v. 10):
Distinguishing of Spirits (v. 10):

Various kinds of tongues (v. 10):
Interpretation of tongues (v. 10):

Know
the Gifts

B. In Corinthians, Paul is showing that Spiritual Gifts ought to be a source of unity and growth

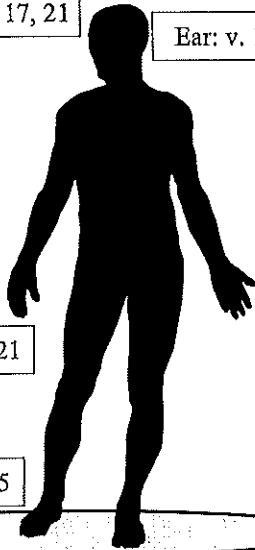
1. "that there should be no division in the body" (12:25)

- Paul reminds the Corinthians of the source of these gifts
 - variety of gifts Same Spirit (v. 4)
 - variety of ministries Same Lord (v. 5)
 - variety of effects Same God (v. 6)
 - We are attached to the same body (12:7-11)
 - We are baptized into the same body (12:12-13)
 - We have the same care for one another (12:25)
- 18x in this chapter "body" is found

Eye: v. 17, 21

Ear: v. 16,17

12:12-27



Hand: v. 15, 21

Foot: v. 15

1. The church is referred to as a "body" - living/active
2. Many members (12,13,14,18,20,27) but one body
3. Every member has a function (not all do the same thing)
4. No one member can do it all
5. Every member is vital and important (v. 21)
 - Paul lists the sense of smell; sight; hearing; touch
 - Even those that do not get much attention (v. 22-23)
 - We need each other (v. 17)
6. Every member is attached to the body
7. God has composed the body (v. 24)
8. The members cannot be hurt without affecting the body (v. 26)

Now you are Christ's body (v. 27)

12:28-31

2. Paul asks many questions in these final verses (7 questions)
3. Paul seems to list God's "Appointments" in order of importance
 - 8 appointments are listed
 - tongues are last (which the Corinthians seemed to put first)

12:31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.

- the greater gifts are not those listed in chapter 12 (found in 13:13)
- the better way is the way of love (chapter 13)

*You are a hand
And you are grand.
You can type or sew or write,
And play the guitar all night.*

*But I'm just a foot, a lousy foot.
Wrapped in this smelly sock,
And stuffed tight in this dirty shoe,
O, how I wish I were you.*

*Feet never shake feet with a neighbor,
Or paint a pretty picture to hang on the wall.*

*But I guess you'd never find your guitar
If I didn't take you down the hall.*

*You are a mouth,
And what a mouth.
You can talk, or eat, or sing,
In fact, do 'most anything.*

*But I'm just an ear,
Covered by people's hair.
Mother's make kids wash behind there
'Cause I'm full of lots of goo.
Oh, how I wish that I were you.*

*Ears never get to sing a song at Christmas,
Or kiss my pretty sweetheart,
But I guess you'd never know she loves you
If she whispered those same words to you.*

*So, we really do need each other.
Hands need feet,
And Mouths need ears,
'Cause the Lord made us to work together.*

1 Corinthians

The Greatest Gift

1 Cor. 13

13:1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

2 And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

4 Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant,

5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,

6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;

7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part;

10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.

11 When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.

12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known.

13 But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

This chapter is a continuation of Paul's discussion of spiritual gifts. The major theme in this section is "love." The questions concerning spiritual gifts (12:1) revealed many problems among the Corinthians, and at the root of these problems was a selfish, proud attitude even among the gifts God had given them. The Corinthians lacked love.

John MacArthur: "This chapter is a breath of fresh air, an oasis in a desert of problems. It is a positive note in the midst of almost continual reproof and correction of wrong understandings, wrong attitudes, wrong behaviors, and wrong use of God's ordinances and gifts" (Commentary on 1 Corinthians, pg. 328).

Paul Shows That Love is:

- The greatest gift (v. 13)
- The enduring gift (v. 8)
- The only acceptable motive for service (v. 1-3)

A. The word "Love" in this chapter is from the Greek word 'Agape'

1. This is not an emotion that comes and goes
2. It is not a feeling or an attitude

- ▶ Greatest commandment is to Love God (Mt. 22:36-40)
- ▶ Love covers a multitude of sins (1 Pet. 4:8)
- ▶ Owe no man anything except Love (Rom. 13:8-10)
- ▶ One who does not Love, does not know God (1 Jn 4:16)
- ▶ God is Love (1 Jn 4:8)

"In God's dictionary love is a deed"

Love is action.
Love is giving.
Love is demonstrated.
Love is based upon others not self.

For God so loved the world that He gave... (Jn 3:16)

B. This chapter is divided into three sections

1. Love must be the basis of our actions (v. 1-3)

Without Love

What I do is of no value (v. 1)
What I am is nothing (v. 2)
What I do is of no benefit to me (v. 3)

"We have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another" Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels.

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2. Love Defined (v. 4-8)

Love Is	Love is Not
1. Patient	1. Not jealous
2. Kind	2. Does not brag
3. Rejoices with the truth	3. Is not arrogant
4. Bears all things	4. Does not act unbecomingly
5. Believes all things	5. Does not seek its own
6. Endures all things	6. Is not provoked
7. Love never fails	7. Does not take into account a wrong suffered
	8. Does not rejoice in unrighteousness

3. Love Endures (v. 8b-13)

- the spiritual gifts that the Corinthians thought so much of would some day cease to exist

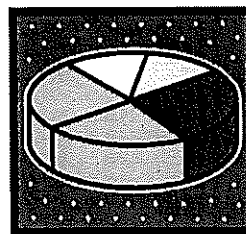
▶ Prophecy, tongues and knowledge all have to do with teaching God's word

▶ We know in PART and prophecy in PART (v. 9), the PARTIAL will be done away when the PERFECT comes (v. 10)

▶ Knowledge & prophecy are PARTS of the WHOLE (Perfect) - that is revelation of God's word

- the "Perfect" (v. 10) (see Mt. 5:48) is not Jesus but the complete or total revelation

2 Pet 1:3



Paul's Two Illustrations

1. Child who grows up (v. 11)
2. Seeing face to face (v. 12)

1. If agape (love) is not a feeling or an emotion, what is it?

2. If love is so important to all that we do, why do we have such a hard time "loving" others?

3. Why would the Corinthians been so excited over the spiritual gift of tongues?

4. What would motivate a group of Christians, like the Ephesians to be faithful in service, when they lacked love (Rev. 2:1-7)?

Love as defined in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

KJV	NAS	NIV	Phillips	Message	OPPOSITE
Charity suffereth long	Love is patient	Love is patient	Slow to lose patience	Love never gives up	Impatient
Is kind	Love is kind	Love is kind	It looks for a way of being constructive	Love cares more for others than for self	Cruel
Charity envieth not	Is not jealous	It does not envy	It is not possessive	Love doesn't want what it doesn't have	Jealous
Charity vaunteth not itself	Love does not brag	It does not boast	It is neither anxious to impress	Love doesn't strut	Arrogant
Is not puffed up	Is not arrogant	It is not proud	Nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance	Doesn't have a swelled head	Proud
Doth not behave itself unseemly	Does not act unbecomingly	It is not rude	Love has good manners	Doesn't force itself on others	Rude
Seeketh not her own	It does not seek its own	It is not self-seeking	Does not pursue selfish advantage	Isn't always "me first"	Selfish
Is not easily provoked	Is not provoked	It is not easily angered	It is not touchy	Doesn't fly off the handle	Angry
Thinketh no evil	Does not take into account a wrong suffered	It keeps no record of wrongs	It does not keep account of evil	Doesn't keep score of the sins of others	Never forgives
Rejoiceth not in iniquity	Does not rejoice in unrighteousness	Loved does not delight in evil	(does not) gloat over the wickedness of other people	Doesn't revel when others grovel	Enjoys wrong
Rejoiceth in the truth	Rejoices with the truth	Rejoices with the truth	It is glad with all good men with truth prevails	Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth	No pleasure for truth
Beareth all things	Bears all things	It always protects	Love knows no limit to its endurance	Puts up with anything	Intolerant
Believeth all things	Believes all things	Always trusts	No end to its trust	Trusts God always	Questions
Hopeth all things	Hopes all things	Always hopes	No fading of its hope	Always looks for the best	Doubts
Endureth all things	Endures all things	Always perseveres	It can outlast anything	Never looks back, but keeps going to the end	Cannot endure
Charity never faileth	Love never fails	Love never fails	It is, in fact, the one that still stands when all else has fallen	Love never dies	Gives up, quits, fails, defeated

1 Corinthians

The Proper Use of Gifts

1 Cor. 14

This chapter concludes a three chapter series on the discussion of spiritual gifts. Paul has shown that the variety of gifts come from one source (ch. 12). He has illustrated that different functioning members are still connected to one body (ch. 12). He has emphasized that the greatest gift and motive is love (ch. 13). Now Paul specifically gets to the heart of the Corinthian question by showing the proper place that Tongues have in the church.

1. "Tongue" or ("tongues") are used 16x in this chapter

Tongues are languages

- ▶ Acts 2:4-8
- ▶ Six times the KJV uses the expression "Unknown Tongue" (v. 2, 4, 13, 14, 19, 27)
 - this has led to the idea of a "Holy Spirit" language or "Heavenly language"
 - The Greek text does not support the word "UNKNOWN"
 - Modern versions omit the word "unknown"

Paul reminds the Corinthians that the purpose of spiritual gifts is to edify the church

- ▶ He has already stated that the gifts are given for the common good (12:7)
- ▶ "Edify" ("edification") is used 7x in chapter 14 (v. 3, 4, 5, 12, 17, 26)
- ▶ "Edify" means to 'build up.' A similar word is "encourage."
- ▶ Paul said earlier, 'love edifies' (8:1)

Spiritual Gifts

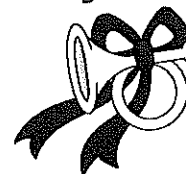
- Were not a sign of salvation
- Were not a demonstration of one's position in the church
- Not even an indication of being a strong Christian. The Corinthians had spiritual gifts and they were carnal (3:1)
- Given to edify the church.

A. Prophecy is Superior to Tongues (v. 1-5)

Tongues	Prophecy
	Desire prophecy (v. 1)
Speaks to God (v. 2)	Speaks to men (3)
No one understands (v. 2)	Edifies those who hear (v. 3)
Edifies self (v. 4)	Edifies church (v. 4)
Wish you spoke in tongues (v. 5)	Greater is the one who prophesies (v. 5)
Unbeliever will think mad (v. 23)	Unbeliever will be convicted (v. 24-25)
Sign to unbelievers (v. 22)	Sign to believers (v. 22)

B. Tongues are Useless if not Understood (v. 6-9)

1. Paul uses three examples to illustrate the importance of being understood
 - himself (v. 6)
 - flutes & harps (v. 7)
 - bugle (v. 8)
2. Appear as a barbarian if not understood (v. 11)
3. Pray for an interpreter (v. 13)
4. Paul would rather speak 5 words to instruct than 10,000 words in a tongue (v. 19)



C. Regulations Regarding Spiritual Gifts (v. 26-36)

Takes place when they are Assembled (v. 26)

1. Let all things be done for edification (v. 26)
2. Tongue speakers
 - only two or three allowed (v. 27)
 - must take turns (v. 27)
 - must have an interpreter present (v. 27)
 - if no interpreter is present, they are to be silent (v. 28)
3. Prophets
 - two or three speak (v. 29)
 - take turns (v. 30-31)
4. Women are to be silent (v. 34)
 - questions are to be directed to their husbands at home, not the assembly (v. 35)



D. Concluding Thoughts

1. Recognize that Paul writes the commands of God (v. 37)
 - these thoughts are not optional
 - failure to regard these thoughts would result in that person not be regarded (v. 38)
2. Desire prophecy
 - do not forbid tongues (v. 39) Paul is not removing tongues, just regulating them
3. All things are to be done properly (v. 40)
 - failure results in the church not being edified

Questions

1. Wouldn't Paul's statement, "greater is the one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues" (v. 5) create strife and division in the church?
2. Paul told the tongue speakers to "keep silent" if an interpreter was not present (v. 28). He told the prophets that their "spirits" were subject to them (v. 32). What conclusions can be drawn from these statements?
3. Paul told the women to "be silent in the churches" (v. 34). What does this mean? How can women sing, if they are to be silent? How can they confess Christ if they are to be silent?
4. Paul said that tongues were a sign to unbelievers (v. 22). Later, he stated that without an interpreter, an unbeliever would think the tongue speaker was mad (v. 23). What do these statements mean?
5. Contrast Paul's instructions here in ch. 14 to the modern Pentecostal revival? What is different?