

Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians – Part 4 (early 54)

1 Corinthians 12–14

Introduction of the Topic of Spiritual Gifts

12:1 Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.

2 You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the speechless idols, however you were led.

3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus *is* accursed,” and no one is able to say “Jesus *is* Lord” except by the Holy Spirit.

The Single Source of Spiritual Gifts

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit,

5 and there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord,

6 and there are varieties of activities, but the same God, who works all *things* in all *people*.

7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for what is beneficial *to all*.

Gifts of the Spirit

8 For to one is given a word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another a word of knowledge by the same Spirit,

9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,

10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing of spirits, to another kinds of tongues, to another interpretation of tongues.

11 But in all these *things* one and the same Spirit is at work, distributing to each one individually just as he wishes.

The Diversity and Interdependence of Members of the Body

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of the body, *although they* are many, are one body, thus also Christ.

13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free *persons*, and all were made to drink one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not *a part* of the body,” not because of this is it not *a part* of the body.

16 And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not *a part* of the body, not because of this is it not *a part* of the body.

17 If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would* the hearing *be*? If the whole *were* hearing, where *would* the sense of smell *be*?

18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body just as he wanted.

19 And if they all were one member, where *would* the body *be*?

20 But now *there are* many members, but one body.

21 Now the eye is not able to say to the hand, “I do not have need of you,” or again, the head to the feet, “I do not have need of you.”

22 But by much more the members of the body which are thought to be weaker are necessary,

23 and *the parts* of the body which we think to be less honorable, these we clothe with more abundant honor, and our unpresentable *parts* come to have more abundant presentability,

24 but our presentable *parts* do not have need *of this*. Yet God composed the body by giving more abundant honor to the part which lacked *it*,

25 in order that there not be a division in the body, but the members would have the same concern for one another.

26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer together; if a member is honored, all the members rejoice with *it*.

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members of it individually,

28 and whom God has appointed in the church: first, apostles, second, prophets, third, teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, administrations, kinds of tongues.

29 Not all *are* apostles, *are they*? Not all *are* prophets, *are they*? Not all *are* teachers, *are they*? Not all *are* workers of miracles, *are they*?

30 Not all have gifts of healing, *do they*? Not all speak with tongues, *do they*? Not all interpret, *do they*?

31 But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

Love—A More Excellent Way

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

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

3 And if I parcel out all my possessions, and if I hand over my body in order that I will be burned, but do not have love, it benefits *me* nothing.

4 Love is patient, love is kind, love is not jealous, *it* does not boast, *it* does not become conceited,

5 *it* does not behave dishonorably, *it* is not selfish, *it* does not become angry, *it* does not keep a record of wrongs,

6 *it* does not rejoice at unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth,
 7 bears all *things*, believes all *things*, hopes all *things*, endures all *things*.
 8 Love never ends. But if *there are* prophecies, they will pass away. If *there are* tongues, they will cease. If *there is* knowledge, it will pass away.
 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part,
 10 but whenever the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.
 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I set aside the things of a child.
 12 For now we see through a mirror indirectly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know completely, just as I have also been completely known.
 13 And now these three *things* remain: faith, hope, *and* love. But the greatest of these *is* love.

The Importance of Edification—A Comparison of Tongues and Prophecy

14:1 Pursue love, and strive for spiritual *gifts*, but especially that you may prophesy.
 2 For the one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God, because no one understands, but by the Spirit he speaks mysteries.
 3 But the one who prophesies speaks to people edification and encouragement and consolation.
 4 The one who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but the one who prophesies edifies the church.
 5 Now I want you all to speak with tongues, but even more that you may prophesy. The one who prophesies *is* greater than the one who speaks with tongues, unless he interprets, in order that the church may receive edification.
 6 But now, brothers, if I come to you speaking with tongues, how do I benefit you, unless I speak to you either with a revelation or with knowledge or with a prophecy or with a teaching?
 7 Likewise, the inanimate things which produce a sound, whether flute or lyre, if they do not produce a distinction in the tones, how will it be known what is played on the flute or on the lyre?
 8 For indeed, if the trumpet produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare for battle?
 9 And so you through the tongue, unless you produce a clear message, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.
 10 There are probably so many kinds of languages in the world, and none without meaning.
 11 Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a barbarian to the one who is speaking, and the one who is speaking *will be* a barbarian in my *judgment*.
 12 In this way also you, since you are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek for the edification of the church, in order that you may abound.
 13 Therefore the one who speaks in a tongue must pray that he may interpret.
 14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unproductive.
 15 Therefore what should I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind. I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will also sing praise with my mind.
 16 For otherwise, if you praise in *your* spirit, how will the one who fills the place of the outsider say the “amen” at your thanksgiving, because he does not know what you are saying?
 17 For indeed you are giving thanks well, but the other person is not edified.
 18 I give thanks to God *that* I speak with tongues more than all of you,
 19 but in the church I prefer to speak five words with my mind, in order that I may instruct other *people*, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

The Greater Gift

20 Brothers, do not become children in *your* understanding, but with respect to wickedness be as a child, and in *your* understanding be mature.
 21 In the law it is written: “By those who speak a foreign language and by the lips of others I will speak to this people, and not even in this way will they obey me,” says the Lord. [[Isa 28:11–12](#)]
 22 So then, tongues are for a sign not to those who believe, but to unbelievers, but prophecy *is* not for unbelievers, but for those who believe.
 23 Therefore, if the whole church comes together at the same *time* and all speak with tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds?
 24 But if all prophesy, and some unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is judged by all,
 25 the secret things of his heart become evident, and so, falling on *his* face, he will worship God, proclaiming, “God is truly among you!”

Proper Corporate Worship

26 Therefore what should you do, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. All *things* must be *done* for edification.

27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, *it must be* on one occasion two or at most three, and one after the other, and one must interpret.
28 But if there is no interpreter, he must be silent in the church, but let him speak to himself and to God.
29 Let two or three prophets speak, and the others evaluate.
30 And if *something* is revealed to another who is seated, the first must be silent.
31 For you are all able to prophesy in turn, in order that all may learn and all may be encouraged,
32 and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets.
33 For God is not *a God of* disorder but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints,
34 the women must be silent in the churches, for it is not permitted for them to speak, but they must be in submission, just as the law also says. [cf. [Gen 3:16](#); [Num 12:1–15](#)]
35 But if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home, for it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.
36 Or has the word of God gone out from you, or has it come to you only?
37 If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, he should recognize that *the things* which I am writing to you are of the Lord.
38 But if anyone ignores *this*, he is ignored.
39 So then, my brothers, desire to prophesy, and do not prevent speaking with tongues.
40 But let all *things* be *done* decently and according to proper procedure.

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