

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*, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware.

2 You know that when you were pagans, *you were* led astray to the mute 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 can 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 There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all *persons*.

7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

Gifts of the Spirit

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

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

10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another *various* kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.

11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

The Diversity and Interdependence of Members of the Body

12 For even as the body is one and *yet* has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.

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

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

15 If the foot says, “Because I am not a hand, I am not *a part* of the body,” it is not for this reason any the less *a part* of the body.

16 And if the ear says, “Because I am not an eye, I am not *a part* of the body,” it is not for this reason any the less *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 desired.

19 If they were all one member, where would the body be?

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

21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; or again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.”

22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary;

23 and those *members* of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable,

24 whereas our more presentable members have no need *of it*. But God has *so* composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that *member* which lacked,

25 so that there may be no division in the body, but *that* the members may have the same care for one another.

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

27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, *various* kinds of tongues.

29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not *workers of* miracles, are they?

30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?

31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I 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 noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

2 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 surrender 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 like a child, think like a child, reason like 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 will know fully just as I also have been fully known.

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

The Importance of Edification—A Comparison of Tongues and Prophecy

14:1 Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual *gifts*, but especially that you may prophesy.

2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in *his* spirit he speaks mysteries.

3 But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.

4 One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church.

5 Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but *even* more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.

6 But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what will I profit you unless I speak to you either by way of revelation or of knowledge or of prophecy or of teaching?

7 Yet *even* lifeless things, either flute or harp, in producing a sound, if they do not produce a distinction in the tones, how will it be known what is played on the flute or on the harp?

8 For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle?

9 So also you, unless you utter by the tongue speech that is clear, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

10 There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and no *kind* is without meaning.

11 If then I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be to the one who speaks a barbarian, and the one who speaks will be a barbarian to me.

12 So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek to abound for the edification of the church.

13 Therefore let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.

14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.

15 What is *the outcome* then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also.

16 Otherwise if you bless in the spirit *only*, how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the “Amen” at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying?

17 For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not edified.

18 I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all;

19 however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind so that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.

The Greater Gift

20 Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature.

21 In the Law it is written, “BY MEN OF STRANGE TONGUES AND BY THE LIPS OF STRANGERS I WILL SPEAK TO THIS PEOPLE, AND EVEN SO THEY WILL NOT LISTEN TO 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 for a sign*, not to unbelievers but to those who believe.

23 Therefore if the whole church assembles together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad?

24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all;

25 the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.

Proper Corporate Worship

26 What is *the outcome* then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, *it should be* by two or at the most three, and *each* in turn, and one must interpret;

28 but if there is no interpreter, he must keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God.

29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment.

30 But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, the first one must keep silent.

31 For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted;
32 and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets;
33 for God is not a *God* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.
34 The women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says. [cf. [Gen 3:16](#); [Num 12:1–15](#)]
35 If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church.
36 Was it from you that the word of God *first* went forth? Or has it come to you only?
37 If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment.
38 But if anyone does not recognize *this*, he is not recognized.
39 Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues.
40 But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner.

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