

**Intro:** Today we will begin to look at a topic that is so important that Paul has dedicated 3 out of 16 chapters (almost 20% of his letter) to the subject.

1. The Holy Spirit; specifically the manifestation and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

**Read 1 Cor 12:1-11 and Pray<sup>1</sup>**

1. A pastor was greeting folks at the door after the service. A woman said, "*Pastor, that was a very good sermon.*" The pastor says, "*Oh, I have to give the credit to the Holy Spirit.*" "*It wasn't THAT good!*" she says.
2. What is your knowledge of and relationship with the Holy Spirit? What do you give Him credit for in your life?

1 Corinthians 12:1      <sup>1</sup> **Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:**

1. Paul's desire is that the Christians in Corinth and you and I today would not be ignorant – in the Greek it's **ἄγνοέω** [*agnoeo* /ag·no·eh·o/]
  - a. This word means to know not and it can denote “being mistaken” or “in error”
  - b. FUNNY: It's from this Greek word that we get our modern word *agnostic*.
  - c. Agnostic: broadly - one who is not committed to believing in either the existence or the nonexistence of God or a god
2. Concerning ignorance, the bible states several things that we are not to be ignorant about.
  - a. We are not to be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts our passage today tells us.
  - b. Romans 2:4      It's ignorance if you don't know that it was the goodness of God that led you to repentance (speaking of our salvation).
  - c. Romans 11:11-36, (specifically Vs 25); we are not to be ignorant by thinking of ourselves as wise because we have been reconciled with God.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise marked, all scriptures taken from the New King James Version. © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

- i. In reality it's because of Israel's disobedience that we Gentiles have obtained mercy, **but God's not done with Israel yet**, they are His covenant people.
    - ii. We need to understand that salvation begins and end with God.
  - d. Romans 6:3-4      We are not to be ignorant or unaware that through our **water baptism** we are identifying with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.
    - i. Baptism is an outward sign of an inward change, but the very motions are a reenactment of what Jesus went through.
  - e. 1 Thes 4:13-18      Speaking about the rapture, we are not to be ignorant concerning believers who "sleep" or have already passed away. They are with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8) and will come with the Lord at His second coming.
- 3. People/Christians are confused about salvation, what God is doing (or going to do) with Israel, what baptism is, what's going to happen at the rapture, and spiritual gifts.
  - a. I believe that this confusion has come because people are not reading their bibles.
  - b. At a time when there are more bibles in print and in the home, yet they are almost entirely neglected and left untouched.
    - i. For example, how many of you over the last week have read your bibles at least 4 times or more?
    - ii. Have you spent more time on Facebook, email, the gym than in the Word?
  - c. To understand spiritual things, we must take the time to consider spiritual things.

1 Corinthians 12:2      <sup>2</sup> **You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.**

- 1. My translation which uses the word **Gentiles** can give you the wrong impression; Paul is not speaking of the people group called the Gentiles, but is using the word to refer to pagans or the pagan custom.
  - a. Have you ever heard someone call a penny-pincher a "Jew"? Same idea.

- b. Some of your translations actually use the word “pagans” in the place of Gentiles.
2. The manner of those pagan people, regardless of how they got into that activity, was that they were carried or led away to idols; dumb idols to be specific.
- a. The verb “carried away” is often used of leading away a prisoner or condemned person.
  - b. They are “dumb” in that they are lifeless, silent, powerless, etc.

1 Corinthians 12:3 <sup>3</sup>Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

1. What Paul is talking about is saying **Jesus is Lord** in sincerity and in saying it you believe it to be true.
- a. Sure someone can parrot those words, repeating them without believing it; Paul’s not talking about that.
  - b. For example, I can say, “Evolution is a scientific theory whereby the central idea is that all life on Earth shares a common ancestor. Through the process of descent with modification, the common ancestor of life on Earth gave rise to the fantastic diversity that we see documented in the fossil record and around us today. Evolution says that we’re all distant cousins: humans and oak trees, hummingbirds and whales.”
  - c. I can say that, but I don’t believe it. As a matter of fact, I personally would place that theory right next to Paul’s reference to dumb idols.

(Show pic of Lego evolution)

- i. But we are not here to discuss the ridiculous assertions of evolution, we’re here to study 1 Corinthians 12.
2. Back to verse 3. Evidently there was an instance or hypothetical question that went like this...
- a. A professing Christian, while under the power of the Holy Spirit actually spoke words, perhaps in a manner that was thought to be spoken in tongues and the message was that Jesus was accursed.
  - b. Apparently the question to Paul was how can that be?

3. Paul boldly responds, “no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed”
  - a. A person may have been able to give the appearance that he was under the power of the Holy Spirit when speaking those words, but Paul helps us understand, that was not the **Spirit of God** speaking through that person.
4. What’s more, “no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit”
  - a. You call yourself a Christian; you believe in Jesus and love Him with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength...
  - b. When you say **Jesus is Lord** it’s because the Holy Spirit has enabled you to see that truth and to speak those words.
5. Let me explain the word **Lord** because I’m afraid that it’s hard for us to understand what this word truly means.
  - a. We live in a society where slavery has been abolished and we believe that all people are equal.
  - b. We live under civil authorities and laws that have been established to prevent any one leader from becoming sovereign ruler over the people.
  - c. We believe in democracy and the voice of the people and we go all over the world to help others throw off the bonds of tyranny often imposed by one all controlling leader.
6. In common usage “lord” reflected the slave system and implied the absolute power exercised by the master over the purchased slave.
  - a. It speaks of one who has full authority.
  - b. One relationship you should understand that is similar is the relationship between the boot Private and the full-bird Colonel on the base.
  - c. The Private is taught to obediently respond to the Colonel’s demands without question.
  - d. While I don’t think that the Lord wants us to go about like we are in a military type of relationship with Him, the principle remains, we are to be fully yielded to His authority.

- e. The word Lord is used 748 times in the New Testament!
7. We are not going to further in this passage this morning because I think there are some foundational issues we must first consider before we will be able to fully understand this passage concerning the manifestation and gifts of the Spirit.
- a. We need to talk about who the Holy Spirit is.

### **Who is the Holy Spirit?**

1. We believe that God is eternally existent in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. The Holy Spirit is the third person in the Trinity. He is fully God. He is eternal, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, has a will, He comforts, is our Helper, our Teacher, and can speak. He is alive. He is a person.
  - a. His ministry is to bear witness of Jesus (John 15:26) and to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8).
  - b. Some cults like the Jehovah's Witnesses say that the Holy Spirit is nothing more than a force. This is false.
  - c. The Holy Spirit speaks (Acts 13:2); can be grieved (Eph. 4:30); has a mind (Rom 8:27) and has a will (1 Cor. 12:11).
  - d. The Spirit prays and makes intercession for us (Rom 8:23-27) and He loves (Rom 15:30).
  - e. He indwells a believer (1 Cor 3:16) and does a regenerating work (Titus 3:5).
  - f. He sets the believer free from sin (Rom 8:2).
3. It is sometimes hard for us to grasp the fact that the Holy Spirit is a Him, not an "it".
  - a. The Bible describes the Holy Spirit as a mighty rushing wind (Acts 2:2).
  - b. We read of His coming upon the disciples in a divided flame of fire (2:3).
  - c. We also read about His descending as a dove (Matt 3:16).

4. But remember, Jesus is called the Bread of Life (John 6:35), and the Father is described as a refuge (Ps 9:9), hiding us under the shadow of His wings (Ps 17:8).
  - a. Does that mean that Jesus is a loaf of bread—or that the Father is a giant bird in heaven? Of course not. These are simply metaphors to help us understand God.
5. The Holy Spirit is a Him, and He has specific work that He wants to do.
  - a. READ John 14:15-18 and 16:5-15
  - b. The Spirit convicts us of our sin – showing us that we are sinners.
  - c. The Holy Spirit takes the message of the death and resurrection of Jesus, shows us it is true, and shows us that we need to turn to God.
  - d. Without the Spirit’s convicting of sin, righteousness, and judgment, you would never have come to Jesus.
  - e. That is why, when I am praying for an unbeliever, I pray that God would convict him or her by His Holy Spirit.
6. The Holy Spirit doesn't convict us of our sin to drive us to despair, but to send us into the open arms of Jesus.
  - a. When Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:37 says that the people "were cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37). This phrase means "pierced in the heart" and describes something that is sudden and unexpected.
  - b. The Holy Spirit will stab you, in effect, but it is not to destroy you. It is to show you your need for Jesus.
7. The Spirit dwells with us and in us. As believers we are sealed with the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 1:22). In other words, the Holy Spirit in us is God’s mark on us that we belong to Him. We are not orphans!
8. In Luke 11:9-13 it says, (READ).
  - a. God the Father gives us the Holy Spirit.
  - b. When we receive the Holy Spirit He manifests Himself in us and gives us gifts to bless other and for the works of ministry.

9. We have some of the gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12 as well as Romans 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11, and 1 Peter 4:9-11.

**A big question/controversy in the church today: Did the gifts cease?**

1. The Christian church is largely divided into two groups over this topic.
  - a. Those groups have names: Cessationism and Continuationism
2. In Christian theology, Cessationism is the view that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as tongues, prophecy and healing, ceased being practiced early on in Church history.
  - a. Cessationists generally believe that the miraculous gifts were given only for the foundation of the Church and ceased when the last book of the bible was written by the Apostle John.
3. Its counterpart is Continuationism which believes that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit have been available for use by the church ever since Pentecost and are in operation today.
4. I'd like to read to you what Calvary Chapel's statement of faith says concerning the Holy Spirit: *We believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the Scriptures, and that they are valid for today if they are exercised within the scriptural guidelines. We as believers are to covet the best gifts, seeking to exercise them in love that the whole Body of Christ might be edified. We believe that love is more important than the most spectacular gifts, and without this love all exercise of spiritual gifts is worthless.*
5. Over the course of the next couple of weeks we will look at Paul's instructions concerning the use and operation of these gifts and manifestations of the Spirit.
  - a. Because different churches hold different opinions on the gifts of the Spirit, I realize that you may hear something that differs from what you heard at your church back home.
  - b. I ask that you prayerfully seek God, faithfully study His word, obediently apply His instructions, and lovingly follow His leading as we cover this material.
  - c. My hope and prayer is that we would not get sucked into the "controversial aspects" of this matter.

- i. But that we'd be known by the rest of the world that we are His disciples because of our love for one another (John13:35).

Recommend Books: The Bible first! Let the Holy Spirit do His work in your life.

- Francis Chan: *The Forgotten God*
- R. A. Torrey, *The Person and Work of The Holy Spirit As Revealed in the Scriptures And in Personal Experience*

**Share the Gospel!**