

# **THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

**VOL 1**

**DON DeWELT**

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### **DEDICATION**

To W. L. Jessup – whose life to me has manifested the fruit of the Holy Spirit

# INTRODUCTION

We propose a thorough study of the subject of the Holy Spirit, i.e. a consideration of every reference in the Bible on the subject. Whereas this will be a thorough study it shall also be very practical and personal. We shall study the subject in thirteen lessons as follows:

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
2. Do all Christians possess the Holy Spirit?
3. How can the Holy Spirit help me?
4. Should I be baptized in the Holy Spirit?
5. Should I speak in tongues?
6. How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?
7. How can I have the fruit of the Spirit?
8. Can the Holy Spirit help me to overcome sin?
9. How did the Holy Spirit help Christ? Is this an example for me?
10. How did the Holy Spirit inspire the writers of the Bible?
11. How can I be led of the Holy Spirit?
12. What about the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament?
13. What is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit?

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# Lesson One

## WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

*Questions you should answer before you study the lesson.*

1. Why is it important that we identify the Holy Spirit?  
Read the following references for some answers: Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 3:16; Eph. 4:30.
2. Is the Holy Spirit a person?  
Read the following references for the answers: I Tim. 4:1; John 14:26; Acts 16:6,7.
3. Is the Holy Spirit God?  
Read the following references for the answers: Heb. 9:14; I Cor. 2:10,11; Gen. 1:2.
4. Where does the Holy Spirit live today?  
Read Rom. 8:9-17; I Cor. 6:19; Acts 2:38.
5. How can we know more about the Holy Spirit? Read Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:22.

### Lesson Discussion

Jesus made a wonderful promise in John 14:16-17: “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for *he abideth with you, and shall be in you.*” Please notice two or three plain points in this promise:

- (1) The Holy Spirit is *another* Helper or Comforter—Jesus was the first Helper or Comforter—in the absence of Jesus the Holy Spirit was to be sent. He was in a sense to take the place of Jesus.
- (2) The Holy Spirit is to be with us for ever.
- (3) The Holy Spirit is not known or received by everyone—only those who are prepared for Him.
- (4) Because the apostles knew Jesus they knew the Holy Spirit—notice: “he abideth *with you*, and shall be *in you.*”

Who was *with* them? Jesus was. Who was to be in them? The Holy Spirit was. But Jesus and the Holy Spirit are so much alike that when the Holy Spirit came into them, He would indeed be “Christ in them, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).

In a very wonderful sense Jesus could have said, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Holy Spirit.” Jesus was not only the embodiment of the heavenly Father, but also of the heavenly Spirit.

We wish to say just two things in this lesson about the Holy Spirit.

First—He *is a person.*

Second—He *is divine.*

### HE IS A PERSON

What would you think of a person who kept referring to your son or daughter as “it.” This would be all right before birth when the sex is not known and the child is not identified—but after birth it is inexcusable—it would hurt the parents to hear their child called “it.”

The Holy Spirit is grieved when we do not recognize Him as a person (Eph. 4:30). The constant use of such expressions as:

“I need more of *it*,” or “*it* ought to be studied more” or “*It* is a great source of power,” is indicative of a lack of knowledge.

These expressions belie our ignorance. The Holy Spirit is *a person* in the same sense that Jesus Christ our Lord is *a person*: in the same sense that *God is a person*. These three are divine persons, but persons nonetheless.

Please notice:

- (1) A person has the power of speech—the Holy Spirit speaks: I Tim. 4:1, “*The Spirit sayeth express/y*” Cf. Acts 8:29.
- (2) A person has the *power to decide*—or exercises the will through the mind. The Holy Spirit has the power of choice: having been *forbidden of the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 16:6,7). The Holy Spirit has a mind: and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is *the mind of the Spirit*’ (Romans 8:27).
- (3) A person has the *ability to teach*. The Holy Spirit teaches: “But the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Strengtheners, Advocate, Standby) even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, *he shall teach you* all things, and bring to your remembrance all that said unto you.” John 14:26. Cf. I Cor. 2:13.
- (4) A person has the *ability to testify or witness*. The Holy Spirit testifies or witnesses: But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, *he shall bear witness of me.*” John 15:26.
- (5) A person *can lead others* and *forbid others*, The Holy Spirit leads and forbids: ‘And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia having been *forbidden of the Holy Spirit* to speak the word in Asia; and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia and *the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not.*” Acts 16:6,7.
- (6) We always use the personal pronoun when referring to a person. Personal pronouns in the masculine gender are applied to the Holy Spirit. This is true even in face of the fact that the noun “Spirit” which is neuter, should have all of its pronouns and modifiers in the neuter: “Howbeit when *he*, the Spirit of truth, is come, *he* shall guide you into all the truth: for *he* shall not speak from *himself*,’ but what things soever *he* shall hear, these shall *he* speak: and *he* shall declare unto you the things that are to come. John 16:13. Cf. John 15:26; 16:7,8.

#### **Answer These Questions**

Do this by reading the references indicated. (Please do not overlook this—we all want to know more of our wonderful unseen guest.)

1. What capacity of the Holy Spirit is indicated in Romans 15:30?
2. Read Isa. 63:10 and Eph. 4:30 and indicate yet another characteristic of the Holy Spirit.
3. Two church members found out that the Holy Spirit was a very real person—read Acts 5:3. What quality of the Holy Spirit is here indicated?
4. Hebrews 10:29 tells of a fearful sin against the Holy Spirit; What is it?
5. Would it be possible to resist the Holy Spirit? Read Acts 7:51 and apply it to today and our lives.

We have learned from our study thus far: “The Holy Spirit is not a mere impersonal force or influence which we somehow get hold of and use; but He is a personal being, wise and holy, who is to get hold of us and use us. He is one with whom we may have the closest friendship, or fellowship. We say with Paul: ‘If there is therefore any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, *if any fellowship of the Spirit*,’ . . . Col. 2:1. Cf. II Cor. 13:14. “He enters into our personalities, and we become new persons, with renewed minds, affections, desires and wills.” (Seth Wilson)

#### **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS DIVINE**

God is a *divine* being or person.

Christ is a *divine* being or person.

The Holy Spirit is a *divine* being or person.

To deny the person or personality of the Holy Spirit is to deny His essential nature.

To deny His deity is to deny God.

What is it that makes God what He is? i.e., what are the essential identifying qualities of God? Here they are:

- (1) God is *eternal*: Psa. 90:2. The Holy Spirit is *eternal*: “how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through *the eternal Spirit* offered himself without blemish unto God, . . .” Heb. 9:14. Cf.

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Gen. 1:2.

- (2) God is *omniscient* or all-wise: Job 32:8 The Holy Spirit is *omniscient*:  
 “For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth, *save the Spirit of God.*” I Cor. 2:11.
- (3) God is *omnipotent* or all-powerful: Gen. 18:14. The Holy Spirit is *omnipotent*: “And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of *the Spirit and of power*: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but *in the Power of God.*” I Cor. 2:4,5. Cf. Luke 1:35; Acts 1:8; Micah 3:8.
- (4) God is omnipresent or everywhere present: I Kings 8:27. The Holy Spirit is *omnipresent*:  
 “*Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall they hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*” Psa. 139:7-10.
- (5) God is *holy*—*God is truth*—*God is grace*—*God is wisdom*: The Holy Spirit is called:  
 a. “*Holy*”—*Eph. 4:30.*  
 b. “*The Spirit of truth.*” John 14:17.  
 c. “*The Spirit of grace.*” Heb. 10:29.  
 d. “*The Spirit of wisdom.*” Isa. 11:2.  
 The Holy Spirit is *called God*: read Acts 5:1-3.

### Answer These Questions

*(In answering these questions you will be reading the word of the Spirit—this is what the Holy Spirit has said about Himself.)*

1. According to Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4; Psa. 104:30; the Holy Spirit had a definite part in the creation of the world. What was it?
2. What quality of God is found in the Holy Spirit according to the following references: Gen. 2:7; Rom. 8:11; John 6:63; John 3:5?
3. The prophets were spokesmen for God, but who gave them their message? Read II Peter 1:21. How does this reference point up the deity of the Holy Spirit?
4. Jesus said, “But if I *by the Spirit of God* cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you.” Matt. 12:28. How does this reference indicate the deity of the Holy Spirit? Cf. I Cor. 12:9,11. The works of the Holy Spirit are the works of God. The inspired writers placed the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit on an equal level. Please read Matt. 28:19; II Cor. 13:14.

*The Holy Spirit is a divine personality.*

### Examination over Lesson One

1. How was it possible for Jesus to say, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Holy Spirit”? (He *did not* say this, but it was possible—explain why.)
2. Why is it wrong to refer to the Holy Spirit as “it”?
3. Specify a time and place when the Holy Spirit spoke.
4. Give three characteristics of a person ascribed to the Holy Spirit.
5. Mention two indications of the sensibilities of the Holy Spirit.
6. We are not to “get hold of the Holy Spirit and use Him’ what is to take place?
7. What is to happen to us when the Holy Spirit enters our personalities?
8. Give three qualities of God found in the Holy Spirit.
9. What were the two basic thoughts of this lesson?
10. Is this divine being in the world today? Where?

## Lesson Two

### DO ALL CHRISTIANS POSSESS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Questions you should answer *before* you study this lesson.

1. “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” Please read Acts 19:1-6; Acts 8:12-15; and Gal. 3:2 for an answer.
2. If you have the Holy Spirit, of what value is He to you? Read: John 7:38,39; Rom. 8:12-17; Rom. 14:17.
3. The Christian is commanded to:
  - (1) “Walk by the Spirit.” Gal. 5:16; 25.
  - (2) “Quench not the Spirit.” I Thess. 5:19.
  - (3) “Grieve not the Holy Spirit.” Eph. 4:30.How shall we know when we are, or are not obedient to these important commands?
4. If we are not “born of the Spirit” (John 3:5) we are not born again. If we “Have not the Spirit of Christ we are none of His.” Romans 8:9,10. At the same time we were washed in the bath of regeneration we were renewed by the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:5. Are these mere theological expressions or a personal reality? Please discuss.
5. If our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (and they are, read I Cor. 6:19,20), how shall we know this to be true? What shall we do about it?

#### Lesson Discussion

We have but a single purpose in this lesson: to emphasize the Scriptural truth that every Christian has a gift from God—the *person of the Holy Spirit indwelling his body*.

We shall approach this purpose in a series of important questions and answers:

#### 1. When is the Holy Spirit given?

*Answer:* When we have repented and have been baptized: Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and *ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*” Acts 2:38.

This is not a gift *from* the Holy Spirit, but rather the gift of the Holy Spirit Himself. God gives a gift to all who repent and are baptized; this gift is the Holy Spirit.

Please notice that the text does *not* say we receive a part of the Holy Spirit, or a measure of the Holy Spirit, or a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. We receive at our obedience a gift from God—this gift is the Holy Spirit Himself.

The Holy Spirit is a divine person—this divine person we obtain as a gift from God upon repentance and baptism. We are not now saying anything about the activity of the Holy Spirit within us—we wish to emphasize the single truth that we have the Holy Spirit. This is true not because we have some emotional sensation, but because God’s Word plainly so indicates.

We are told in I Thess. 5:23 that man is a divine being possessed of spirit, soul, and body. It is possible to identify our bodies, but what of our souls and spirits? Shall we say we have no spirit or soul because we have no emotional reaction to indicate their existence? We know God has said it and we believe it.

We are not here discussing the work of the Holy Spirit within man, nor are we discussing His activity through man. Our single point now is *the reception of the Holy Spirit*. When and where do we receive the Holy Spirit? Acts 2:38 plainly states upon repentance and baptism we receive a gift from God which is the Holy Spirit.

Acts 19:1-6 is a good comparative reference on this one point: “And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples: and he said unto them *“Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”* (The word “believed” was inclusive of all they did to accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour. According to Peter in Acts 2:38 it included repentance and baptism. Paul also so taught: (Rom. 6:1-4; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:23). At the time of their acceptance of Christ they should have received the Holy Spirit. Paul found here in Ephesus a group of disciples very much in need of not only the Holy Spirit, but of salvation in Christ. In response to Paul’s question these twelve disciples said, “Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given.” Upon such an answer *Paul inquired into the action of where and when the Holy Spirit was given—“And he said, into what, then, were ye baptized?”* And they said, into John’s baptism. And Paul said John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on Him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.” Why were these disciples baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus? *Because they lacked the Holy Spirit and Christian baptism is where and when we obtain the Holy Spirit as a gift.* Upon receiving the Holy Spirit, Paul laid his hands upon these persons so as to grant to them certain miraculous powers through the Holy Spirit within them. We are not here discussing the abilities of speaking in tongues or prophesying. We wish only to point out that Christian baptism is the *time* and *place* of the reception of the Holy Spirit.

The final reference on this point is Acts 8:14-17: “Now when the apostles that were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: *for as yet it was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.* Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.”

Please notice that the text indicates a definite connection between the Holy Spirit and baptism. What is this connection? It is simply, that they had received the Holy Spirit in baptism, but not in His miraculous powers. Peter and John came that the Holy Spirit might “fall on them.” Prior to the coming of Peter and John the only relationship these Samaritans sustained to the Holy Spirit was found in their baptism. What was this relationship? The obvious conclusion is that they had received the Holy Spirit in baptism, but not with miraculous powers. The prayer and laying on of hands by Peter and John provided the “falling upon,” or the exercising of special powers of the Holy Spirit—baptism provided for His presence—Peter and John provided for His miraculous powers.

## **2. Where does the Holy Spirit live?**

*Answer:* In the body of every Christian.

This is plainly taught in the following references: “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Romans 8:11)

Twice it is asserted in no uncertain terms that the Holy Spirit lives in the body of the Christian. We believe this because it is so stated in the Scripture—not because we can explain how it is possible. The best attempted explanation as to how it is possible for the Holy Spirit to live in our bodies is found in the thought that it is possible in the same way that it is possible for our own human spirit to live in our bodies.

“Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own?” I Cor. 6:19.

How is it possible for the Holy Spirit to dwell in a thousand places at one time? Is this not a contradiction of the unity of His being or nature? Since we know nothing of the essential nature of the Holy Spirit other than the fact that He is a spiritual being like God, we have no answer. What we do know is the plain statement of fact that He considers the body of man as His sanctuary and resides there. “in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.” Eph. 2:22.

In many places the New Testament states that God dwells in us—in this reference we learn how this is possible—God dwells in us in the person of the Holy Spirit.

I John 3:24 states in very plain words that God dwells in us through the Holy Spirit. Notice: “And he that keepeth his commandments abideth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he gave us.”

I John 4:13 should also be read in this connection.

One more reference in answer to this question: "Therefore he that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God, who giveth his Holy Spirit unto you." I Thess. 4:8.

God has given the Holy Spirit to every Christian as a gift. The Holy Spirit is given to the Christian upon his obedience in Christian baptism. (Acts 5:32.) The Holy Spirit lives in the Christian's body as His temple.

### **3. In What sense is the Christian "born of the Holy Spirit"?**

Answer: We believe the discussion of this question by Warren E. Bell in his tract, How Can a Man Be Born Again? is so well stated that we reproduce it here for your edification.

"Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came unto him by night, and said to him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Jn. 3:1-5.

Of all the Bible subjects of which one should be undoubtedly certain, this is it. Unless we have the right answer to this question, we "cannot enter" the kingdom of God.

God planned both physical birth and the new birth. There is striking similarity between them.

### **1.—THE BEGETTING OF NEW LIFE**

Before a child can be born it must be generated or begotten by its father. The same is true of the new birth. Before one can be born again he must be begotten again. This means there must be a life-causing seed to generate the new life. Is there such a seed?

1. Lk. 8:5-8 records Jesus' parable of the sower who "went forth to sow his seed." Christ Himself explains the story. "Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God."

2. "Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth." I Pet. 1:23.

3. "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth." Jas. 1:18.

All of this means that the Holy Spirit inspired word is the life-causing seed that is planted in our hearts. How true it is that "belief cometh of hearing and hearing by the word of Christ." Rom. 10:17.

You can know when you have been begotten again. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God." I Jn. 5:1. The Greek word translated "begotten" is used of a father when he begets a child and of a mother when she gives birth to a child. When it refers to the father it is properly translated "to beget, generate"; when it refers to the mother it is translated "to bring forth, bear, give birth to." We are begotten of God, our Father.

Let us remember that there has not been a birth! By the hearing of the word we have been caused to believe and thus begotten again. Without it there can be no birth, but the begetting a/one is not the new birth.

### **11.—THE EVIDENCE OF NEW LIFE**

In physical generation, soon after the begetting, but before the birth, certain evidences of life take place. The new life that has been begotten makes itself known. Even so, the new life caused by the word of the Spirit becomes evident. The new life on the inside is seen by a new behavior on the outside. This change is called repentance. The spiritually begotten person stops the practice of all known sin. He makes a complete turn in his life and begins to live to please Christ.

1. "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God." I Jn. 3:9.

This does not teach sinless perfection. These action words refer to continuous action. The one truly begotten of God does not deliberately continue in sin; he does not make a practice of sin.

2. "For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath



overcome the world, even our faith. And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? I Jn. 5:4-5.

When one acts like people in the world when he ought to be different, he is worldly. Real faith in Christ causes us to overcome a world-like manner of life and to desire a Christlike manner of life. This is a result of our new begetting.

There has not yet been a birth. By believing the word we have been caused to change our mind and conduct toward wrong-doing. Without this there can be no birth, but repentance alone is not the new birth.

### **111.—THE BIRTH OF THE NEW LIFE**

The begetting was by means of the word of the Spirit. The birth is to be by means of water. Jesus said that both were necessary. The newly begotten person must be placed in water and come forth from water. We are begotten when we believe and we are born when we are baptized.

1. “He that believeth (there is the begetting) and is baptized (there is the birth) shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.” Mk. 16:16. True, Jesus did not say that if we were not baptized we should be condemned. This is understood. If there is no begetting there can be no birth. To cancel the begetting is to cancel the birth.

2. “Not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.” Tit. 3:5.

Here again is the water and the Spirit. How does He save us? Through a “washing” and a “renewing.”

### **SOME INEVITABLE CONCLUSIONS**

1. There can be no birth without a begetting.

One must be begotten by the word (believe) before he can be scripturally born of water (baptized). Suppose we were to get a strong rope and securely tie your neighbor, and while he loudly objects we take him to the river and baptize him. Would he be a Christian? How can we believe that an infant is born of water without any faith in Christ and then is begotten twelve years later? There is not one Scripture in the New Testament authorizing such a practice. In the Bible only penitent believers were baptized. An infant cannot meet either qualification. Without faith there is no life and baptism is only a still birth.

2. The begetting alone does not make one a new creature.

It takes both the Spirit and the water. “For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.” Gal. 3:26-27. This is the “delivery” that climaxes God’s way of making one into a new creature. By it we are “Delivered out of the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love.” Col. 1:13.

“Faith apart from works is dead.” Jam. 2:26.

Our faith will bring us to a new birth or it will miscarry and die.

How can a man be born again? There is God’s part and there is man’s part. The word to cause faith and the grace to cover sins, this is God’s part. The believing and the obeying is our part. God Himself cannot do for us what we must do ourselves.

### ***Examination over Lesson Two***

1. When is the Holy Spirit given? Please give a Scripture to prove your answer.
2. Are the divine works of the Spirit inseparably associated with His presence? i.e., were there persons who had the Holy Spirit without His miraculous powers?
3. Would it be possible for a person to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and yet not receive the Holy Spirit as a gift? Discuss.
4. Where does the Holy Spirit live? Please give a Scripture to prove your answer.

5. How is it possible for the Holy Spirit to dwell in more than one place at a time? Is not this a contradiction of the nature of the Holy Spirit?
6. In what sense does God and Christ dwell in us?
7. In what sense is the Christian born of the Holy Spirit?
8. Explain in your own words how the word of God produces a “begetting.” Cf. I Pet. 1:23; Luke 8:4-8; James 1:18.
9. Do some persons who have never born show more “evidences of life” than some who claim to be born of God? Is this an answer to the problem of the virtue in the lives of some who are not Christians?
10. Specify two ways in which we might grieve the Holy Spirit. Cf. Eph. 4:30

## Lesson Three

# HOW CAN THE HOLY SPIRIT HELP ME?

Questions you should answer *before* you study the lesson.

1. The Holy Spirit is called “another comforter” and yet I have received very little if any comfort from Him. Why is this? Eph. 3:16; Rom. 8:13,14.
2. I have read in my Bible that I am to “walk by the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16; 25) and yet I do not know how to do it. What shall I do?
3. Isn’t “longsuffering” the virtue developed by the Holy Spirit? (Gal. 5:22.) I have observed persons who were not Christians far more “longsuffering” than some Christians. Please explain this. Jude 19.
4. If the Holy Spirit has helped me in temptation I do not know it, and yet I believe I read in Rom. 8:13,14 and Eph. 3:16 that He was to help in temptations. Why does He not help me? I Cor. 10:13.
5. Isn’t the Holy Spirit to help us in prayer? (Rom. 8:26.) How is this possible?

### Lesson Discussion

We want to help in entering into the enjoyment of eight ways in which the Holy Spirit can help every Christian. Please study with us:

#### 1. The Holy Spirit helps the Christian in overcoming sin.

“So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but *if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*” Romans 8:12,13.

We have a great debt to pay. We are bankrupt as to payment. Who shall help us pay our debt to Christ? After all our Lord has done for us the least we can do for Him is to live for Him, and yet this is the one thing we fail to do. We anticipate life and receive death. Why is this? Every humbly honest Christian knows of the power of Satan through the flesh. We are no match for Satan. The evil one has an ally in our flesh—we seem powerless to overcome. We cannot of ourselves “put to death” the evil deeds prompted by the body. Who shall deliver us? The answer is in the aid offered by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will come to our side with more than enough help to give us the victory. How shall this be?

“The Christian who neglects to watch and pray will most surely find that he knows not how to use this his great strength, for he will be losing realization of his oneness with his Lord. But then the man who actually and in the depth of his being, is ‘doing to death the practices of the body,’ is doing so, *immediately*, not by discipline, nor by direct effort, but by the believing use of ‘the Spirit.’ Filled with Him, he treads upon the power of the evil one. And that fullness is according to surrendering *faith*.”—  
(*Moule, p. 222*)

We need to believe and claim this assistance. We do not have such help because we can feel it or identify it, but rather because God promised it and we claim it on the basis of His promise. We cannot hope for help from the Holy Spirit if we are not willing to be vigilant and prayerful.

“Still the will is to be your will, the effort your effort, and the result your deed. To you the whole is seen to be your own unaided act. You will hence approve or blame yourself whenever you succeed or fail, just as though wholly unassisted. Nevertheless the Holy Spirit will aid you. But this aid will be tendered back out of sight. It will not be pushed out so as to come under the eye of consciousness. You will hence never be able to take any sensible notice of it. You will be conscious of the effort and you can know the result. But you are *told* merely, that you are aided. Hence the fact that you are so is matter of belief, not of knowledge.”

—(*Lard, p. 263*)

## 2. The Holy Spirit helps the Christian in prayer.

“And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but *the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us* with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Romans 8:26.

In areas where we are weak the Holy Spirit supplies help. One of these areas is in the matter of prayer. We do know how to pray for some things, and in such we have no need or promise of help—but when we know not how to frame the petition to the throne of grace we have the blessed assistance of the Holy Spirit.

Of what does this help consist? It is plainly intercession for us. How can this be when there is but one intercessor with the Father—Jesus Christ the righteous? (I Tim. 2:5) This intercession of the Holy Spirit must relate to the Christian in such a manner as not to violate the unique office of Christ. How can this be?

Would it not be in the assistance granted to the Christian so as to enable him to intelligently form a petition to the Father through the Son? Under the duress of sorrow, or pain, or disappointment, we have nothing but inarticulate sighs and groans to offer in prayer. The Holy Spirit does his intercessory work with these groans and sighs. He reads the deepest need of the human heart—he knows the heart of the Father. The groans and sighs of the Christian are made intelligible by the Spirit—the Holy Spirit helps to make meaningful the communication to God through the Son.

## 3. The Holy Spirit Seals the Christian. Eph. 1:13,14, 4:30.

“in whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation—in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God’s own possession, unto the praise of his glory.” “the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption.”

Here are some questions we shall attempt to answer as related to the sealing of the Holy Spirit: (1) Just what is this seal? (2) How do we know we have it? (3) What are the results of having such a seal? (4) Who sees the seal? (5) Can we lose the seal?

### *Identifying the Seal*

There were several types of seals in the apostolic days. Seals were stamped on clay and wax as well as wood and papyrus. Seals carried the signature of an official or of the state. It carried the following significance:

#### a. *Anything bearing a seal was authentic.*

If the issue was whether an item could be declared authentic or not it was decided upon by the authenticity of the seal. If the seal was true, then the whole document was accepted.

The Christian claim to acceptance with God is settled by the presence of God’s seal.

The presence or absence of the seal is not at all dependent upon the emotions of man. The Christian is sealed by the Holy Spirit because God says he is, not because the Christian can emotionally identify or respond to the presence of the seal.

When the sinner complies with the requirements for salvation through the Gospel by accepting his Lord and Saviour, God accepts him as His son and places the stamp of acceptance within him by giving him the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit Himself is the seal of authentic identification. “If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Rom. 8:9). It follows also that if a man hath the Spirit of Christ he does belong to Him.

#### b. *Anything bearing a seal declares its ownership.*

From what we have already written, the truth of this thought should be very evident. We think of II Timothy 2:19: “Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His; and, let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness.”

How does the Lord know those who are His? By the presence of the seal or the Holy Spirit in their hearts. Only God can see and read the seal. Man can observe the results of the seal. The fruit of the

Spirit indicates that we are departing from unrighteousness.

Now to answer the five questions asked at the beginning of this thought:

- (1) What is the seal? *Answer:* The Holy Spirit.
- (2) How do we know we have it? *Answer:* By complying with God's requirements for salvation. Cf. Acts 2:38; 5:32.
- (3) What are the results of the seal? *Answer:* The fruit of the Spirit. Cf. Gal. 5:22. Departing from unrighteousness.
- (4) Who sees the seal? *Answer:* Only God.
- (5) Can we lose this seal? *Answer:* We can surely grieve Him and obliterate the meaning of the seal in our lives. "His servants ye are whom ye obey." Rom. 6:16.

#### **4. The Holy Spirit Bears Witness with the Spirit of the Christian that he is a Child of God. Romans 8:16.**

"The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God."

It is sometimes as helpful to notice what the Bible does not say on a subject as it is to notice what it does say. In the case before us: The Bible does not say that the Holy Spirit bears witness to our spirit, thus making it a subjective experience within the Christian. The text does say the Holy Spirit bears witness with our Spirit, thus making it an objective experience without or apart from the Christian. The witness of the Holy Spirit is the New Testament. This is His testimony as to how to become a Christian or child of God, and also how to remain faithful as God's child.

We know within ourselves if we have done what the Spirit has said to do in order to become a child of God.

The testimony of the Holy Spirit is to the effect that if:

- (1) We believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that He died for our sins according to the Scriptures; (Cf. Matt. 16:18; Mark 16:16; Acts 16:31,32; I Cor. 15:1-4).
- (2) If we repent of all known sin in our life; (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30,31).
- (3) If we confess our faith before men; (Matt. 10:31,32; Rom. 10:9,10).
- (4) If we are immersed in water for the remission of sin; (Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Peter 3:21; Rom. 6:1-4).

We then become a child of God, our spirits have agreed with the testimony of the Holy Spirit—Both Spirits—the Holy Spirit and our spirit testify to God that we are children of His.

The saints in Rome knew what the Holy Spirit had revealed through the inspired spokesman and penmen—they had followed the form of teaching delivered by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:17). In a knowledge of this obedience they could acknowledge with a personal satisfaction the truthfulness of our test:

"The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our Spirit that we are children of God" Rom. 8:16.

#### **5. The Holy Spirit is not to be quenched in the life of the Christian.**

"Quench not the Spirit." I Thess. 5:19.

The word "quench" suggests a smothered fire—the Holy Spirit, however, is not an inanimate object but is a person. It is easy to recall the reaction of a loved one who becomes discouraged by an opposing attitude. The fire of enthusiasm is smothered by a cold response. Just so with the Holy Spirit of God. He wants to fill our lives with all His blessed fruit; when we refuse to decide in His favor, His power and presence within us are quenched or smothered.

Is it necessary to understand how food is translated into energy for us to enjoy the strength provided by such energy? Neither is it necessary that we understand how the Holy Spirit, who indwells our bodies, can transfer His strength to our inward man. Such power and strength can be used and enjoyed without conscious awareness or identification.

#### **Answer These Questions**

1. Explain God's part and the Holy Spirit's part in overcoming sin.

2. Why should we blame ourselves if we fail to overcome sin when the Holy Spirit has promised aid in this area?
3. When does the Holy Spirit make intercession for us?
4. Why does the Holy Spirit make intercession for us?
5. What is the sealing of the Holy Spirit?
6. What are the results of being sealed with the Holy Spirit?
7. Of what help to the Christian is the witness of the Holy Spirit?
8. To whom is the witness of the Holy Spirit borne?
9. In what sense is the Holy Spirit quenched?
10. How can we know when the Holy Spirit is quenched?

**6. The Christian is to “walk by the Spirit.” Gal. 5:16; 25.**

“But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”

“If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk.”

This thought has to do with an attitude of life. We live by and through our attitudes of life. Sometimes attitudes are developed almost without awareness.

The world about us is a constant teacher,—all that we see, hear, and speak has a part in the impression of the subconscious. We are constantly becoming, no one has arrived, we are always in the process of becoming.

If we do not take time to be holy we shall never be holy!

“Set your mind upon the things which are above—for ye died and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

Col. 3:1-3.

They that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit mind the things of the Spirit.” Romans 8:6.

We would all be delighted to simply turn our lives over to the Holy Spirit and ask Him to perform some type of divine immunization on us, until we would become insensitive to the things of this world—until the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, would leave no appeal. But this He cannot and will not do. If we are to walk by the Spirit it will be because we deliberately choose to set our minds upon the things of the Spirit instead of the world. What are the “things of the Spirit” upon which we can think? (Cf. Phil. 4:8.) Here are a few of them:

- (1) *Prayer*—do you have a prayer list of specific requests? Paul did—you should have.
- (2) *Bible Study*—Are you constantly engaged in some new and better study of God’s word? There are so many wonderful aids to Bible study that we ought to be able to meditate on His word both day and night. Cf. Psa. 1:1-6.
- (3) *Personal Evangelism*—There are so very many ways in which we can do this. When we have a spare moment upon what do our minds and hearts feed? Are we attempting to think of some new and better way of testifying for Christ? Have you thought about the:
  - (1) Best use of gospel tracts?
  - (2) Writing letters on a regular basis for soul-winning or edification?
  - (3) The use of filmstrips in home teaching?
  - (4) Follow-up on absentees from your Bible School class?
  - (5) A list of prospects for salvation on a regular prayer schedule?

Walking by the Spirit is a way of life—The instructions for such a walk are completely given by the Holy Spirit in the Word of the Spirit, called the New Testament.

What is your philosophy of life? Is your thinking:

- (1) Materialistic?
- (2) Fleshly?



- (3) Selfish? or
- (4) Spiritual?

**7. The Christian is to be careful not to grieve the Holy Spirit.**

“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God” Eph. 4:30.

Let us suggest a few ways in which the Holy Spirit might be grieved.

- (1) *Ignore the Holy Spirit and you will most certainly grieve Him.*

Of all injuries to the sensitive, that of indifference is the most painful. The Holy Spirit is the most sensitive of beings. It is no accident He is represented by a dove. The dove is hurt by lack of attention and will often pine or brood without food over such a slight of attention.

Have we unwittingly grieved the Spirit of love by our almost complete indifference to Him? We often treat this blessed Unseen Guest in a manner completely in contradiction to His importance to us and to God.

- (2) We can grieve the Holy Spirit by forcing Him to see and hear what is opposed to His will. When the Holy Spirit took up residence within us He did so with the thought of aiding us in developing a holy character. When we view a lustful program on television, do we stop to realize the Holy Spirit lives within this body of ours and that we are looking and listening to that which is in direct violation to His holy nature?

When we are selfish and prideful the Holy Spirit is grieved and hurt. We have chosen to follow and obey the spirit of evil. We have followed the suggestions of Satan.

Paul said his conscience bore witness in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 9:1). Our conscience is the communication point or contact for the Holy Spirit as well as Satan. Does the Holy Spirit communicate His grief to the conscience of the Christian?

We know the conscience must be educated by the Word of the Spirit, but when this is true our conscience can and does accuse or else excuse us by and through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 2:15).

We are certain Satan as a spiritual being has access to our spirit, and in such a manner as to communicate his will to us. When we have disobeyed God or are tempted to do so, our conscience accuses us, but who prompts the conscience to accuse us in the manner it does? Does the Holy Spirit add His strength to the accusation so as to make it especially strong and poignant? We like to believe He does.

**If Jesus Came To Your House**

If Jesus came to your house to spend a day or two—  
If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you'd do.

Oh, I know you'd give your nicest room to such an honored Guest,  
And all the food you'd serve to Him would be the very best,  
And you would keep assuring Him you're glad to have Him there —  
That serving Him in your own home is joy beyond compare.

But when you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the door  
With arms outstretched in welcome to your heav'nly Visitor?  
Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in,  
Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they'd been?

Would you turn off the radio and hope He hadn't heard,  
And wish you hadn't uttered that last, loud hasty word?  
Would you hide your worldly music and put some hymnbooks out?  
Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?

And I wonder if the Saviour spent a day or two with you,  
Would you go right on doing the things you always do?

Would you keep right on saying the things you always say?  
Would life for you continue as it does from day to day?

Would your family conversation keep up its usual pace,  
And would you find it hard each meal to say a table grace?  
Would you sing the songs you always sing and read the books you read  
And let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit feed?

Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you'd planned to go,  
Or would you maybe change your plans for just a day or so?  
Would you be glad to have Him meet your very closest friends,  
Or would you hope they'd stay away until His visit ends?

Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on,  
Or would you sigh with great relief when He at last was gone?  
It might be interesting to know the things that you would do  
If Jesus Christ in person came to spend some time with you.

LOIS BLANCHARD

We have news for you—Jesus has come to dwell within you and me through the presence of the blessed Holy Spirit.

#### **8. The Christian Is To Be Filled With the Holy Spirit.**

Eph. 5:18; Acts 4:32; 13:52; 6:3.

Oh, the blessed possibility of being filled with the Spirit of another—yea, the Spirit of Christ and God, through the presence of the Holy Spirit!

This should not be thought of as some mystical, mysterious, ecstatic experience reserved for the select few who discover the secret. This should be the experience of every child of God— indeed “This manifestation of the divine nature in us (Cf. Pet. 1:3,4) by reason of the personal indwelling of God’s Spirit in place of, or in control of, our Spirits, is the ultimate goal of God’s work with us. This is the end for which miracles were wrought. It is the object for which miracles can never be an acceptable substitute.” (Seth Wilson) Cf. I Tim. 1:5; II Pet. 1:3-11; I John 1:5-8; 3:1-6; I Cor. 12:31, 14:1.

It is possible to be controlled by another to the extent that we lose our identity.

Do any of you know of a man with what is called “a mother complex”? This poor individual has lost his identity to his mother. He has no mind of his own. He only and always does whatever mother wants him to. Someone will recall a husband and wife relationship in which this is true. There are indeed “domineering wives” or “domineering husbands.” How do such conditions take place? The will or desires of one person are so strong and constant that the weaker of the two yields to it. Sometimes this is a very unhappy situation and in other instances both persons seem pleased to have it so.

Why isn’t the Holy Spirit the domineering force in our lives? Because we do not know His will, or because if we do we ignore it in favor of our own. Only by meditating day and night on what He wants us to do and say will we replace our desires with His desires. The difference and contrast in this comparison of the domineering of one personality by another is that in the case of the Holy Spirit it is a willing, glad yielding.

We shall find it necessary to often spend time reading and praying over His will for our lives—conscious all the while that He is in us to aid us in fulfilling His purposes for us.

#### **Answer These Questions**

1. What is meant by the expression “walk by the Spirit”?
2. Mention three aids to walking by the Spirit.
3. Mention two ways by which we can grieve the Holy Spirit.

4. What is the communication point of the Holy Spirit within the Christian?
5. What is the ultimate goal of God's work within us? How is it accomplished?

**Examination over Lesson Three**

1. Just how does the Holy Spirit help us to overcome sin? Be specific.
2. When does the Holy Spirit help us in prayer?
3. What is the seal of the Holy Spirit? What does it indicate?
4. Explain how the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are children of God.
5. Specify a method by which we quench the Holy Spirit.
6. How does the mind relate to walking by the Spirit?
7. How does prayer help us to walk by the Spirit?
8. Mention three things that would grieve the Holy Spirit.
  9. Explain the process of being filled with the Holy Spirit?
10. Why isn't the Holy Spirit the domineering force in our lives?

## Lesson Four

### SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Questions you should answer before you study this lesson.

1. *If you were baptized in the Holy Spirit, what purpose would there be in such an experience? Please read Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16; I Cor. 12:13. Carefully note the purpose for the baptism in the Holy Spirit as indicated in these verses.*
2. *What is the meaning of the term 'baptism'? How is it here used of the Holy Spirit and man? Read Acts 2:1-4; Luke 24: 49; Acts 11:16,17.*
3. *Could we be "filled with the Holy Spirit" such as those in: Acts 4:31; 6:3; 13:52; and yet not be baptized in the Holy Spirit? Would we say—"All who are baptized in the Holy Spirit are filled with the Holy Spirit, but not all who are filled with the Holy Spirit are baptized in the Holy Spirit?"*
4. *Must we speak in tongues in order to be baptized in the Holy Spirit? Those on Pentecost did (Acts 2:1-4). Those at the house of Cornelius did (Acts 10:44-46).*
5. *Are either of the two examples of Holy Spirit baptism examples for us today? Acts 1:5; 1:26—2:4; 11:15-17.*
6. *Would it be possible to have the Holy Spirit as a gift without His miraculous powers? i.e., could He live in some without performing signs and wonders? Read Acts 5:32; Eph. 2:22; I Thess. 4:8.*
7. *What shall we say has happened to certain persons of our day who claim to have been baptized in the Holy Spirit? Read II Thess. 2:9-11.*

It is with a keen awareness of a present problem that we take up the subject of the Holy Spirit baptism. There are a good number of folk among us who claim this experience. To such persons we wish to ask a series of very serious questions! We shall study this lesson by asking and answering the following questions:

#### 1. What purpose is there in being baptized in the Holy Spirit?

Here are three possible answers—each of them representative of a different understanding of the subject:

##### ***The First Answer:***

"I am baptized in the Holy Spirit in order to become a Christian." In this person's mind, conversion and the baptism in the Holy Spirit are co-equal or synonymous. The proof-text most often used to support such an understanding is I Cor. 12:13: "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into the one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of the one Spirit."

John F. Walvoord, President and Professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, is one of the chief proponents of this conception. He says:

*"Salvation and baptism coextensive.* One of the prevailing misconceptions of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the notion that it is a special ministration enjoyed by only a few Christians. On the contrary, the Scriptures make it plain that every Christian is baptized by the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. Salvation and baptism are therefore coextensive, and it is impossible to be saved without this work of the Holy Spirit. This is expressly stated in the central passage on the doctrine, 'For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit' (I Cor. 12:13)..'

All Christians baptized by the Spirit. It is evident from this passage that all Christians are baptized by the Holy Spirit, and that all who enter the number of the body of Christ do so because they are baptized by the Spirit. It may be noted that this passage is found in an epistle addressed to a church which is guilty of gross sins, of factions and defection from the faith. Yet they are reminded that they are

baptized by the Spirit. This work of the Spirit is not directed toward those who are free from guilt, nor is it held as an objective or height to reach. It is rather stated to be the universal work of the Spirit in every believer. (The Holy Spirit by John F. Wolvoord, pp. 139, 140.)

This is a very popular school of thought. The September issue of Moody Month!)’, page 27:

“Often I come across the words, ‘the baptism of the Holy Spirit.’ In the New Testament, these words are used to describe an experience of the Holy Spirit which always occurs in the initiation of a relationship, and never as a subsequent experience.”

A very interesting discussion of this position is to be found in Lard’s Quarterlies, Vols. I and II.

We should like to make two or three observations about such an understanding of the subject:

First: the expression, “For by (or in) one Spirit were we all baptized into one body,” can be translated: “For by the means of or through the agency of the one Spirit were we all baptized into one body.”

In such a translation, the meaning is that the Holy Spirit was an instrument or agent to bring about our baptism into the one body, or Christ’s church (Cf. Eph. 1:22,23; Col. 1:18).

The Holy Spirit provides the word of God, which is proclaimed by the man of God. When the sinner hears that he must repent and be baptized for the remission of his sin, (Acts 2:38) he responds. Thus, through or by the agency of the Holy Spirit supplying the inspiration for the preaching of the word of God, (to say nothing of the conviction through the word in the heart of the sinner), the Holy Spirit has been the agent or the means of leading the sinner to be baptized in water into the one body—and at the same time and in the same experience he was made to drink or partake of the one Spirit.

Second: The only two places in the entire New Testament where an experience is called or designated “the baptism in the Holy Spirit” is: (1) Acts 2:1-4 and (2) Acts 10:44-46, Cf. 11: 15-17.

A. Please read Acts 1:5:

“But ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence.”

Of this same experience Luke says in 24:49:

“And behold, I send forth *the promise of my Father* upon you; but tarry ye in the city, *until ye be clothed with power from on high.*”

The historic fulfillment of this promise to the apostles occurred on the Day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem in 34 A.D. as recorded in Acts 2:1-4.

B. Please read Acts 10:44—46:

“While Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the Word. And they of the circumcision that believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them *‘speak with tongues, and magnify God*”

That such an experience was the baptism in the Holy Spirit is abundantly evident by reading Peter’s account of the experience as given in Acts 11:15-17:

*‘And as I began to speak the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. (Please remember that Peter was speaking to the Apostles and brethren of Judea—cf. 11:1,2.) And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptized with water but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit.’*

*(Cf. Acts 1:4,5.) If, then, God gave unto them the like gift as he did also unto us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?*

Peter says in no uncertain terms that what happened in Caesarea to the house of Cornelius was the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

There are but six references in the New Testament to the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Here they are:

- (1) Matt. 3:11—The promise of John the Baptist which was fulfilled historically on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4).
- (2) Mark 1:8—The same promise of John as recorded by Mark.
- (3) Luke 3:16—Luke’s version of the same promise.
- (4) John 1:33—This is the Apostle John’s version of the same promise.
- (5) Acts 1:5—The promise of Jesus concerning the Day of Pentecost.
- (6) Acts 11: 16—The reference to the house of Cornelius, who experienced the baptism in the Holy Spirit in the same manner as the Apostles on Pentecost.

Anyone, anywhere, anytime can select an experience described in the New Testament and call such an experience the baptism in the Holy Spirit—such as calling the experience of the twelve men at Ephesus, as recorded in Acts 19:1-6, the baptism in the Holy Spirit (those who spoke in tongues and prophesied) or those in Acts 8:14-17 (the case where the Apostles Peter and John imparted the Holy Spirit by laying on of their hands), but calling such experiences the baptism in the Holy Spirit does not mean that what occurred was the baptism in the Holy Spirit! Unless the Word of God identifies an experience by designating it, we have no right to identify it and designate it with only human authority!

Something wonderful and glorious may have happened to some folk of our day, but please, please, call Bible things by Bible names. The Bible calls but two experiences the baptism in the Holy Spirit—what occurred on Pentecost to the Apostles, and what occurred in Caesarea to the house of Cornelius.

In neither case was conversion involved in the purpose of the experience. At Pentecost the purpose was to empower the Apostles for witnessing (Cf. Acts 1:8). At Caesarea it was to convince the Jews that the Gentiles were to be received as fellow heirs of the kingdom of heaven (Cf. Acts 11:15-17).

In neither case do we have an example for today, for we are not apostles, and we are not alien sinners as were those of the house of Cornelius.

This last statement may cause some to read it a second time. Please notice Acts 10:47,48. In verse 48 Peter commands water baptism for those who have already received the Holy Spirit baptism. Do you believe water baptism is for salvation as stated in Mark 16:16? If so, then you must conclude with me that the house of Cornelius offers no pattern for present-day practice of the Holy Spirit baptism, and that Holy Spirit baptism and salvation are not the same thing.

### ***The Second Answer:***

“After that night (the night of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit) my life completely changed. The peace and joy of which the Scriptures so often spoke became a reality in my life, and I was able among other things to praise God in other languages. In the Revival I conducted the following week at Liberal, Kansas, I had a power in my preaching that was never present before.” (Quoted from *The Spiritual Witness*, May, 1962.) The purpose here stated is to grant power, peace, and joy for service.

We do not for one moment doubt the sincerity of such persons —nor do we doubt that something happened to them. People have been and are, sincerely wrong. If we do not believe that the Scriptures teach Holy Spirit baptism for today, we must conclude that the experiences of such persons are self-induced—they are sincerely self-deceived. We are not going to attempt a psychoanalysis of such persons—we simply say that what happened to them was not the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. If the purpose of Holy Spirit baptism is not for salvation or preparation for service—just what was its purpose?

### ***The Third Answer.’***

The purpose of baptizing the twelve Apostles in the Holy Spirit was to equip them with supernatural powers they would need in carrying out their mission on earth. The twelve were personal representatives of Christ. He said of them, “Whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven—whatsoever ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 18:18; 16:19). “As the Father hath sent me so send I you” (John 17:18). In order to exercise such power they must be infallible—the baptism in the Holy Spirit gave them this infallibility. With such power, whatever they spoke for Christ was always complete and correct. Whatever they wrote for Christ was infallibly accurate.

To support their position in the eyes of an unbelieving world, they were supplied or equipped with the ability to perform miracles—such ability’ came through, or because of, the Holy Spirit baptism. The miracles of the apostles became “signs.” What did these signs say? Each miracle said, These men are from God. their message is true—believe their word.

The purpose of the Holy Spirit baptism on Pentecost was twofold: (1) To provide personal infallibility for the twelve apostles so that whatever they did, spoke, or wrote for Christ was always correct. (2) To provide the power to perform miracles to confirm their words in the eyes of a pagan and unbelieving world.

Someone will immediately say: “Aren’t we living in the midst of an unbelieving world today?” Of course we are—but we are not apostles. God has already established His word—indeed, His word has already’ been established. The case for Christianity has already been tried—the record of such a trial and

its results are recorded in the New Testament. This record is here for us to preach to all the world. Heaven and earth shall pass away before this record shall be lost (Matt. 24:35). We do not need the baptism in the Holy Spirit today, since Christ promised the Apostles He would lead them into all truth (John 16:13). He kept His promise—the Apostles were led into all truth—the record of such leading, and of the truth they spoke and wrote is contained in the New Testament. The record of the triumph of such truth over the unbelieving world, by the power of miracles performed through the Apostles, is also recorded. Shall we repeat it today? If we did repeat it, into what truth will He lead us since He was to lead the twelve into all truth? Why confirm with miracles what has already been confirmed? Do we doubt the record? Why preserve the record if we are to repeat it in every generation?



We have already noted that the baptism in the Holy Spirit of the house of Cornelius had a special purpose—i.e., to convince the prejudiced Jews that the Gentiles were to be accepted into the kingdom of God (Acts 11:15-17). Such a purpose has no bearing upon present-day practice.

### Answer These Questions

1. *How do you interpret I Cor. 12:13? Please be honest about this reference and your understanding.*
2. *Prove that the experience of the house of Cornelius was the baptism in the Holy Spirit and not an example for us today.*
3. *Why do some claim the experience of Holy Spirit baptism for today; i.e., for what purpose is such an experience given?*
4. *What do you believe has happened to some persons of our day who claim to have been baptized in the Holy Spirit?*
5. *What do you say is the purpose of Holy Spirit baptism?*

### 2. ***What is the meaning of the term “baptism” as it is here used of the Holy Spirit and man?***

We believe this is the crux of the whole matter. In 1859 James Challen wrote a splendid treatise on the subject of Baptism in the Holy Spirit and in Fire—we wish to quote from his work on this question:

John says, “I indeed baptize you with (in) water unto repentance. but he (Christ) shall baptize you with (in) the Holy Spirit and in fire.”

*The element into which the subjects of John’s baptism were introduced was water. The elements into which the persons were to be introduced by Christ’s baptism—were the Holy Spirit and fire. Christ’s baptism as referred to here has nothing to do specifically with the commission given to the apostles by the Saviour on the day of His ascension, in which water was to be used as the element. The baptism found in the commission, the apostles and others associated with them were to perform, for they were perfectly competent to do it; but the baptism of the Spirit was to be administered by Jesus in person, and only by Him—not even the Father could do it, speaking economically; nor the Spirit, independently of the Son. It was reserved as the high and solemn prerogative of Jesus, as the crowned and anointed Lord, to do this—the sublimest of all acts; baptize in the Holy Spirit. This we will not at present consider, as it is not a necessary part of our argument.*

*We now state distinctly that if John literally baptized in water, then Jesus was literally to baptize in the Holy Spirit and in fire. If the former is expressive of a literal baptism in water, the latter is expressive of a literal baptism in the Holy Spirit and in fire.*

To render the action of a literal immersion ridiculous, and to cast contempt upon it, there is a certain class of persons who use words as expressive of the act, known or felt to be offensive, such as “dip,” “plunge,” etc. To these words we would not object, if they did not show the bitter, perhaps malevolent, disposition exhibited on the part of those employing them; and as an appeal to the prejudices of the vulgar to invoke their hatred to what we deem to be a divine ordinance. Such a spirit, so alien from the spirit of Christ, cannot be too severely rebuked or condemned.

We choose the word “immerse,” because there is no stigma felt or implied by its use. If we were Grecians, we would employ the word baptize invariably, because it fully, as a word of action, expresses all that is intended to be performed by it.

But as the word baptize is a Greek word, transferred, and not translated, we choose to give it its true and proper meaning in the current coin of the English language, and this is the word immerse.

Is there anything ridiculous in the idea of immersing a body in water or any other element? Then there is none in immersing a spirit in spirit! The latter idea is often expressed in our ordinary speech.

We say, a man is immersed in business, in politics, in pleasure, and we feel no repugnance in the use of such terms. And what do we mean by this language? Simply, that his mind is wholly taken up with these things.

We say that a man is immersed in philosophy, in mathematics, or in the languages, when he makes any one of these branches of study the chief occupation of his thoughts. In use, in all these applications of it, it is both appropriate and beautiful to say certain minds were wholly absorbed, occupied with, or immersed in spirit, or in spiritual things. And was not this the case with the apostles?

Surely, it is more congruous with the nature of such matters and the use of language, to use the word immerse, than the word sprinkle or pour. In the latter, the mind is subjected to certain influences but partially—’ a mere sprinkling,” as we sometimes say; but in the former, it is imbued with the element into which it has been put, and partakes largely of it. And was not this the case in regard to those who were the subjects of the Spirit’s baptism? They were wholly brought under the influence of the Holy Spirit: His thoughts were their thoughts; His words were their words. No term can more fully express the design to be effected, than the one we have used; and it is the exact translation of the one found in the original.

We say then, emphatically, that the baptism referred to was an immersion in the Holy Spirit—the spirit of man immersed into the spirit of God. There is nothing repugnant, either in the word used, or in the thing signified. It is as beautifully expressed in the English as in the Greek.

If the spirit of God pervades all things and is everywhere present—for, “whither shall we fly from His presence?” —why may not the spirit of man be steeped into and attempered by it? If the whole material universe is immersed by His presence—if, as in an atmosphere of light, angels and men, things terrestrial and heavenly, are bathed in the ocean of His fullness—why may not the souls of those specially designated to act on some glorious mission of love be fully pervaded by His presence, and tinged by the divine beauty and sanctity which he possesses? What God has done in the vast, may He not do also in the minute?

Shame on it! That men calling themselves Christians should seek to throw contempt upon, and create disgust at, the sublimest of all the mysteries connected with the establishment of that institution, which has for its author “the Wonderful—the Counsellor!”

If in baptism the obedient believer enters into Christ—into His death—into His body; if, indeed, he is baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: why should it be an incredible thing that a soul may be immersed into the Holy Spirit, and hence be imbued with His gifts and graces? It is the soul—the spirit of the believer—not his body, that in Christian baptism enters into Christ, partakes of the benefits of His death, and becomes a member of His body, and he who objects to a baptism into the Holy Spirit may as well object to a baptism into Christ!

It is a significant fact, that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was to be specially Christ’s baptism: “He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit.” Not that water baptism was to be ignored or set aside by it; for He commissioned His apostles to “disciple all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” It was not His baptism in the sense that water-baptism was to be set aside, and the Spirit’s baptism exclusively should take its place; for after the baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and in the house of Cornelius, water-baptism was practiced by the apostles and others.

The baptism of the Spirit was Christ’s baptism in the sense that no one could administer it but Him. The apostles and others, like John, could administer baptism in the element of water; but no one but Jesus, the Anointed Lord, could administer baptism in the Holy Spirit. It was wholly divine and human hands could not be employed in it. Only He, who had all authority in heaven and in earth, could do it. “He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire.”

This baptism was the highest and sublimest evidence of Christ’s wisdom, power, and goodness, ever

seen. It was the full dawn of a spiritual day upon the darkened understandings of the Galileans. It lifted them up in a moment from all the earthborn hopes and cherished prejudices of the age, and plunged them into the ocean of beatitudes, that dwelt in the bosom of Him, who searches even into the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the thoughts of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him; so no one knows the things of God, but the spirit of God.”

Are those persons today who claim such an experience willing to also claim its results? Let us state it a little more plainly:

- (1) Will modern claimants to Spirit baptism agree that when they speak for Christ their words are the words of the Holy Spirit? We must realize that what happened on Pentecost was only the beginning of the Spirit's work in the lives of the apostles.

The spirits or minds of the apostles were immersed in the Holy Spirit so as to give them infallibility in teaching and preaching.

Will persons today claim such infallibility in teaching and preaching?

- (2) Will present-day advocates of Holy Spirit baptism agree that their writing for Christ is totally under the control of the Holy Spirit? The apostles wrote as the Spirit gave them expression. Will modern claimants agree to this result in their writing? If any person writes under the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit we should treasure what they have written as we do our New Testament, for it is equally inspired. If not, why not? In the absence of such results why make such a claim?

Right at this juncture will be a good time and place to discuss the different expressions which describe the event on Pentecost. We have already indicated that Jesus called it "the baptism in the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5). He also called the very same experience being "clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). Jesus said of the experience, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you. and ye shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). When the event took place Luke said, "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:1-4). In reference to the event, Peter referred to it as "the promise of the Father which He bath poured forth" (Acts 2: 33).

While talking with the other apostles and the brethren of Judea, Peter refers to the occurrence on Pentecost and says of it, "If then God gave unto them (the house of Cornelius) the like gift as he did also unto us He also here refers to the occurrence as "the baptism in the Holy Spirit" (Acts 11:16,17).

Let us now summarize the expressions that all refer to the same event:

- (1) "Clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:49)
- (2) "The Baptism in the Holy Spirit." (Acts 1:5)
- (3) "Receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you. (Acts 1:8)
- (4) "Filled with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:4)
- (5) "Poured forth." (Acts 2:33)
- (6) "The like gift." (Acts 11:16)

All of these expressions refer to what occurred on the day of Pentecost. Are we to imagine, then, that every time we find one of these expressions in the New Testament it is referring to a similar experience? Not unless the context of that expression so indicates.

What occurred on Pentecost was a one-time historical incident. Please note:

- (1) it was promised to certain persons, ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit." (Acts 1:5. By referring to 1:2 we know the apostles were promised such an experience. Luke 24:49 also confirms this thought.)
- (2) it was promised for a certain time, "not many days hence" (Acts 1:4,5). There were ten days from the time of the promise to its fulfillment on Pentecost.
- (3) it was promised for a certain place, "tarry in the city" (Luke 24:49). It was fulfilled in the city of Jerusalem (Cf. Acts 1:6).
- (4) it was promised for a certain purpose. "Ye shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). The apostles became His eye-witnesses.

When the day of Pentecost came, the apostles were waiting and praying expectantly for "the promise of the Father." When Jesus sent the Holy Spirit at Pentecost He sent Him to clothe the apostles with power from on high—in doing this He at the same time immersed their spirits in the Holy Spirit. These apostles received the promised power for witnessing—they were filled with the Holy Spirit which had been poured forth upon them as a gift from God.

Is it not the height of folly to lift one or more of these expressions from the event here described—i.e., the baptism in the Holy Spirit—and say wherever we find such an expression it has reference to the same experience?

All Christians are to be “filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18)— does this mean they are baptized in the Holy Spirit when they are filled? Why would it?

Does Eph. 5:18 characterize the filling as a “baptism” or “being clothed with power from on high”? If not, then is it not presumptuous for us to do so?

Once again we say that only twice in the New Testament record does the expression “baptized with the Holy Spirit” appear —Pentecost and the house of Cornelius. To call anything else by this term is pure assumption.

Only once did anyone receive the promise of being clothed with power—or of being empowered for witnessing—when such was fulfilled on Pentecost the apostles were said to be filled with the Holy Spirit—but they were filled in a particular way and manner which was not promised to anyone else.

It should be obvious by now that we believe the words of John the Baptist in Matt. 3:11,12 (Cf. Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33), have been fulfilled on Pentecost and at the house of Cornelius. We believe Acts 1:5 and 11:16 confirm this position. Until Jesus specified the persons involved in this baptism it would indeed be a general promise; but even the general promise would have some limitations. Some in John’s audience were not prepared to accept Jesus as their Messiah—others were to die before the promise was fulfilled.

Many Old Testament prophets made such general promises that awaited the specific day and time to indicate the persons involved in their fulfillment.

Jesus took the general promise and indicated who was involved in it. Notice please:

Jesus said to His apostles:

“for John indeed was baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence” (Acts 1:5).

John the Baptist said:

“I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire” (Matt. 3:11,12).

### **Answer These Questions**

1. Who were the administrators of the baptism of the great commission and of the baptism in the Holy Spirit?
2. Explain just how the action of immersion in the Holy Spirit occurred.
3. What do we mean when we say a man is immersed in business, politics, pleasure, etc.? How does this relate to Holy Spirit baptism?
4. If we were to see today the results of Holy Spirit baptism (i.e., in the lives of persons of our day), what would they be?
5. Why is it wrong to say that every time we read in the Bible the expression “filled with the Holy Spirit” it has reference to the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

### **1. Could we be “filled with the Holy Spirit” as those in Acts 4:31; 6:3; 13:52 and yet not be baptized in the Holy Spirit?**

Let’s consider carefully:

*Acts 4. 31*

“And when they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together and *they were all filled with the Holy Spirit* and spoke the word of God with boldness.”

The persons filled with the Holy Spirit are called “their company” (cf. 4:23), to whom Peter and John

returned after their trial before the council. Such persons could have been the other ten apostles or a larger group. In either case, such persons were filled with the Holy Spirit without evidence of miraculous powers.

Acts 6:3

“Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report *full of the Spirit* and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.”

In the qualifications for the seven deacons of the Jerusalem Church they must be “full of the Spirit” BEFORE they were appointed to the task of serving. There is no indication of supernatural powers associated with the fullness of the spirit in this reference.

Acts 13:52

“And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.”

Here is a clear case of the fullness of the Holy Spirit on the part of many, if not all the saints in the church at Antioch of Pisidia. Is there any indication that such persons spoke in tongues or prophesied? Could we not say—“All who are baptized in the Holy Spirit are filled with the Holy Spirit but not all who are filled with the Holy Spirit are baptized in the Holy Spirit”?

The baptizing experience of the Holy Spirit would not leave man’s spirit free to choose—i.e., while under the complete domination of the Holy Spirit—whereas the fullness of the Spirit is an optional matter. We can and do choose to be full of ourselves and our ways or full of the Holy Spirit and His way. This presupposes that we know the will of the Spirit so as to choose to do it.

We propose an entire lesson on the subject of “Should I be filled with the Holy Spirit” and, therefore, plan a complete treatment of the subject then. Suffice it to say here that we have no greater need in the church today than the command of the apostle Paul to the Ephesian Church:

“And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18).

The definite inference is that the Christian is to be under the control of the Spirit in the same manner that a drunkard is under the control of wine. Drinking wine is a voluntary choice; it affects the mind and the body; others are aware of its influence.

So is being filled with the Holy Spirit a voluntary matter— which takes place subjectively—i.e., within the person or subject —it occurs of him and by him—the mind and the body are affected—others are aware of the Spirit’s influence. More about this in a later lesson.

#### **4. Must we speak in tongues in order to be baptized in the Holy Spirit?**

If the reader has studied consecutively through the fourth lesson he should be able to answer this question for himself.

In the only two instances of Holy Spirit baptism, the persons involved did speak in tongues, but in neither case do we have an example for present day practice.

It should be understood that speaking in tongues was practiced by those who were not baptized in the Holy Spirit. Cf. Acts 19:1-6; I Cor. 12:1-11.

Such persons as mentioned in the above references were possessed of powers granted by the laying on of the apostle’s hands. (At least this is the only means of impartation mentioned in the Scripture—if there was another way of obtaining these gifts we do not know about it.)

We shall devote an entire lesson to the subject of Spiritual Gifts—inclusive of speaking in tongues.

#### **5. What shall we say has happened to certain persons of our day who claim to have been baptized in the Holy Spirit?**

We shall not at all doubt their sincerity, nor shall we say nothing of import has happened to them. We shall be forced to say by our study of the subject that their experience is not the baptism in the Holy Spirit as we find it described in the book of Acts.

What has happened to such persons is self-induced. Please do not forget that Mormons (Latter Day Saints), claim the very same experiences of speaking in tongues. Christian Scientists also claim supernatural healings. Mohammedans claim supernatural aid in their conquests for Allah. The simple fact that something strange happened to certain persons does not mean God has visited them.

We must never make the tragic mistake of believing in an experience, or in the testimony of an experience, and then attempting to support such experience with the Bible.

We cannot offer a logical explanation for every experience— it is not necessary that we do so—all we need is a knowledge of the Word of truth concerning the experience.

What has happened to a number of our brethren in the past few months might be explained in a number of ways—the important fact is, “Does the Word of God support it?”

From my study I cannot see Biblical support for present-day claims to the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

***Answer These Questions***

1. What point is made by a consideration of Acts 4:31?
2. What do we learn from the seven servants of the Jerusalem church?
3. What should be our conclusion as to being filled with the Holy Spirit and Holy Spirit baptism?
4. To what extent should the Christian be influenced by the Holy Spirit?
5. What shall we say of certain persons of our day who claim the experience of Holy Spirit baptism? Please explain.



### **Examination over Lesson *Four***

1. Give and discuss in your own words the three purposes in the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
2. Please give your own interpretation of I Cor. 12:13.
3. Give at least one reason why the baptism in the Holy Spirit as mentioned in Acts 1:5 and 2:1-4 is not an example for today. Do the same with Acts 10:44-48 Cf. 11:16.
4. What was the purpose of the baptism of the Apostles in the Holy Spirit?
5. Explain in your own words the meaning of the word “baptism” as it relates to the Holy Spirit—i.e., how immersion takes place.
6. Give at least three Scriptural phrases used to describe the experience on Pentecost. Explain each.
7. If all Christians are to be “filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18) are they not then baptized with the Holy Spirit?
8. Explain how one could be “filled with the Holy Spirit,” and yet not be baptized with the Holy Spirit.
9. How shall we explain modern-day claims to Holy Spirit baptism?

## Lesson Five

# SHOULD I SPEAK IN TONGUES?

Questions you should answer before you read the lesson.

1. If I spoke in a tongue would I know what I said? If not, of what value would it be?
2. Would this tongue be one of the known languages, or an unknown heavenly language?
3. Could I obtain the other supernatural gifts of I Cor. 12:1-11 in the same way the gift of tongues was given? Why does the gift of tongues appear in discussion far more often than any of the other gifts?
4. What would be the purpose of speaking in tongues?
5. I do not understand the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapters of I Corinthians—is it possible to understand?
6. Just how can I obtain this power to speak in tongues? I *must* have a Scriptural answer—one based on the Bible, not on human experience.
7. How is it possible that persons with different beliefs concerning the plan of salvation claim the same gift of tongues;? i.e., certain persons who feel baptism does not relate to the remission of sins yet claim and demonstrate the gift of tongues.
8. How many spiritual gifts are there? Please read Romans 12:6-8 and Ephesians 4:8-11 as well as I Corinthians 12:4-10; 28-30. Please list them.
9. Do the early church fathers, (i.e., the writers of the first three centuries), support the idea of the continuance of these gifts, or do they say such gifts ceased in the early church?
10. What difference does it make if I believe in the use of tongues or not?

### WHAT ARE SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

We have reference to the Spiritual gifts mentioned in I Corinthians 12:4-10; 28-30. Cf. Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:8-11.

Such powers or abilities were called Spiritual because they were prompted by or through the Holy Spirit. They are referred to as gifts because they are gratis or not earned. They were not merited by the possessors, but were given by God out of free grace.

Please do not mistake these gifts of the Holy Spirit for the Holy Spirit Himself. The possessors of such gifts or abilities had the Holy Spirit (also as a gift) before the supernatural abilities were granted to them through the Holy Spirit.

The one distinction such persons possessed when compared with other Christians was the power or ability the Holy Spirit granted to them, which ability was not given to others. Others possessed the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9), but He did not exercise His supernatural abilities through them.

All persons in the Corinthian church had a gift from God, which was the Holy Spirit—but only a certain number were able to exercise supernatural powers—these persons were said to have “Spiritual gifts.”

### Can You Define Each Of These Gifts?

We are indebted to Ronnie R. Hanna for the following material which appears in his Master of Arts thesis: The Charismatic Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

### Discussion Of Each Gift

Each gift will be discussed separately and as briefly as possible.

### WORD OF WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

Since these two are somewhat closely related, they will be considered together. It is not always easy to distinguish clearly between them. One must keep in mind the fact that has already been mentioned, that a considerable portion of comments on these two gifts, as well as all the rest of the charismata, are purely conjecture. Some prominent commentators have the following to say about these gifts:

“Wisdom consists of all the gracious, heavenly, and efficacious thoughts of God embodied in Christ Jesus for the enlightenment of our souls. As this wisdom is embodied in Christ Jesus, so it likewise consists in the Gospel. Ability to state this wisdom to others is the best and highest spiritual gift. This ‘expression of wisdom’ is thus always mediated ‘through the Spirit.’ Through Him we are enabled, not only to apprehend this wisdom in our own hearts for our own salvation, but also to convey what we have apprehended to others for their salvation. In this gift we must include also the ability to apply divine wisdom in a practical way to our own and to other men’s lives.”

A distinctive feature of knowledge is the personal apprehension of the details of the Gospel. It too, deals with the Gospel, but there is nothing in the term that includes speculation or speculative and philosophic ideas. ‘Knowledge’ deals with the explanation, the unfolding, and the correlation of gospel facts or we may call them doctrines. The word of knowledge is the ability to impart this personal knowledge to others.”<sup>1</sup>

“Wisdom is the more comprehensive term. By it we know the true value of things through seeing what they really are; it is spiritual insight and comprehension (Eph. 1:17). By knowledge we have intelligent grasp of principles of the Gospel. It may be the result of instruction guided by reason, and it requires no special illumination; but the use of this knowledge, in accordance with the Spirit, for the edification of others is the special gift.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Schaff, Philip, C., op. cit. vl. 1, p. 437-438

<sup>2</sup>Piummer, Atrred, *international Critical Commentary*, I Corinthians, p. 265

### FAITH

It seems doubtful that this faith described here is that saving faith so commonly referred to in the New Testament, but rather it seems more likely to refer to a miraculous faith which is described as having power to remove mountains. This is mentioned in Matthew 17:20. Those possessing this charism (gift) were able to accomplish things that are otherwise impossible, which would include all kinds of miraculous powers. This gift seems to have been a special direct gift which “Enabled a man to place himself beyond the region of mere mortal certainty in the actual realization of things believed in a high and universal manner.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Alford, Henry, *The New Testament for English Readers*, p. 1052

### PROPHECY

The word prophecy comes from the Greek word which signifies literally to “speak forth.” Although much of the prophecy of the Old Testament was predictive, the main element of prophecy is not necessarily foretelling. The term would more properly signify a forthtelling either in reference to the past, present, or future. The term could be defined as either to fore tell, forth tell, teach, praise, or edify.

This gift enabled those who possessed it to communicate directly to the people the message of God under guidance of the Holy Spirit. This gift was absolutely necessary in New Testament times especially

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in those congregations where there were no apostles. When the full and final revelation was completed, this gift had no longer any purpose for existing and so it ceased. Prophecy was transformed in passing to the regular ministry of preaching the Word. The great preachers like Chrysostom can be said to be the true descendants of the New Testament prophets.

“The term ‘Prophecy’ is used in a double sense; broadly to indicate any and all ability to communicate the saving will of God to others so that every true teacher and preacher may be called a prophet; and more narrowly to designate the receiving and the communicating of direct and specific messages from God. The apostles were prophets in both senses of the term. Their regular assistants were prophets in both senses of the term, but more specifically in the former sense. Agabus (Acts 11:28; 21:19) and Philip’s daughters (Acts 21:9) were prophets in the latter sense.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Plummer, Alfred, op. Cit p. 266

“Prophecy is not necessarily predicting future events but preaching the word with power. It implies a special insight into revealed truths and a great faculty for making them and their consequences known to others. The prophets were inspired to utter the deep things of God for the conviction of sin, for edification and comfort; sometimes also for predicting the future.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Plummer, Alfred, op. Cit. p. 266

Sadler offers the following interesting comment on this gift:

“This gift of prophecy was absolutely necessary before the various books of the New Testament were collected and distributed amongst the churches, that in each local church men should be raised up having a deeper insight than their fellows into the spiritual meaning of the facts of the Lord’s Godhead, Incarnation, Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession, and Second Coming. God according to the needs of the then existing church, raised up such men, till the Gospels and the letters of the apostles were collected and diffused throughout the church. When this took place, prophecy apparently ceased, and preaching took its place—preaching in the sense of explaining and practically enforcing upon Christians the truths contained in the Gospels and Epistles.”<sup>2</sup>

To conclude this section on prophecy two comments from two of the prominent church Fathers will be given.

“Prophecy does not refer to the prophecy of things unheard and unknown, but of things both announced and known.”<sup>1</sup>

“Prophecy, outpourings, in their nobler examples, such visions, mandates, and similitudes as these, more or less human as to form, and impressive testimony against heathen oracles and their obscene and blasphemous suggestions.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Sadler M. F. Romans; p. 277

<sup>3</sup>Iertullian, Apostolic Fathers, VI.2, pg. 4, quoted from Sadler, M.F. op. cit. pg. 278

<sup>4</sup>Hermas, *ibid.*

## DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

This gift consisted in the God given ability to determine what was truth and what was error. It was especially necessary at this critical time when God’s revelation was not fully established or generally understood. Several scriptures tell us that at this time false prophets were at work and in general there was a devilish imitation of the spiritual gifts and of the work of Christ.

I John 4: 1—“Beloved not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

II Corinthians 11:13-15—“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”

II Thessalonians 2:9-12—“Even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a

working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

II John 7—”For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh.” This gift gave the possessor that unction from on high (I John 2:20) that enabled him to judge rightly whether the utterance or writing came from the Holy Spirit, the human spirit, unaided, or from delusive spirits of demons.

This gift is used for the purpose of penetrating into what lies back of certain utterances or works in order to determine whether they truly emanate from the Holy Spirit or whether they present pretenses of the human spirit or contain the deception of the spirit of evil. False prophets love to use deceptive language. For the purpose of unmasking these prophets the Lord provides this gift and thus enables His church to turn from lying spirits to the one Spirit of Truth.”<sup>1</sup>

“This gift enabled its possessors to discriminate true prophets from false, and judge whether what was announced came from God or was an illusion. Such a gift was indispensable when false prophets abounded and forced their way into congregations and increased every year in numbers and activity.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lenski, R. C., op. cit. p. 503

<sup>2</sup>Plummer, Alfred, op. cit. p. 12

An interesting description of the use of this gift in discerning a true prophet from a false prophet is found in the Pastor of Hermas, one of the writings of the early church fathers.

“How will we tell which is a true prophet and a false prophet? The one having divine spirit is meek, peaceable, and humble, and refrains from all impurity and vain desire of this world, and contents himself with fewer wants than those of other men. This spirit speaks only when God wishes it to speak.”

“False spirit manifests itself in the following manner: a man exalts himself, and wishes to have the first seat, and is bold, imprudent, and lives in the midst of many luxuries and many other delusions, and takes rewards for his prophecy, and if he does not receive rewards he does not prophesy. Take a stone and throw it to the sky, and see if you can touch it. Or again take a squirt of water and squirt into the sky and see if you can penetrate the sky. Impossible! So earthly spirits are powerless and pitiless. Look at the power which comes from above. Hail is of the size of a very small grain, yet when it falls on man’s head how much annoyance it gives him! or again take the drop which falls from a pitcher to the ground, and yet it hollows a stone. Thus is the divine Spirit that which comes from above.”

### **Answer These Questions**

1. Please define the two words—”Spiritual Gifts.”
2. Discuss the distinction between Wisdom and Knowledge.
3. There are at least two uses of the word “faith”—give them.
4. Show how the gift of prophecy was absolutely essential in New Testament times.
5. What was the purpose of the gift of discerning Spirits?

### **WORKING OF MIRACLES**

This gift consisted in the operation of miraculous powers in general. The Greek words for this gift can be properly translated “inworking of powers” that is the ability to produce or work miracles on others. These miraculous powers consisted in exorcizing demons, raising the dead, and other similar works to serve as outward credentials and seals of the divinity of the message preached by the apostles, and others who possessed this gift. Lenski has the following interesting comment regarding this gift:

“One should not think that healings and miracles were wrought at will by the person concerned. In each instance a specific intimation came to them from the spirit that the act should be performed, and not until that moment did it occur, but then it always took place without fail. In each instance the gift or the

energy is bestowed by a communication, even the apostles made no attempt to perform a miracle. Workings is better translated energies since a work always requires the corresponding power.”<sup>2</sup>



The book of Acts gives us several examples of the operation of this gift.

<sup>1</sup>Apostolic Fathers, VI. 3; p. 27-28, quoted from Schaff, op. cit. p. 438

<sup>2</sup>Lenski, R. C., op. cit. p. 502

- Acts 3:7—in giving the account of the healing of the lame man: “And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up; and immediately his feet and his anklebones received strength.”
- Acts 9:36—the account of Peter raising Dorcas: “But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning to the body, he said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and raised her up .
- Acts 16: 18—The account of the exorcizing of the demon from the soothsaying maid: “But Paul, being sore troubled, turned and said to the spirit, I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.”
- Acts 5:3-5—The account of Ananias and Sapphira lying to the Holy Spirit and being struck dead because of it: “But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, did it not remain thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thy power? How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down and gave up the ghost and great fear came upon all that heard it.”
- Acts 13:8-11—The account of the conversation of Sergius Paulus: “But Flymas the sorcerer withstood them, seeking to turn aside the procounsul from the faith. But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on him and said, O full of all guile and all villainy, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.”

## HEALING

Those who possessed this gift were able to heal all manner of diseases. The plural (gifts) is used here to refer evidently to the variety of ailments that were cured. These cures could be obtained in several ways including the laying on of hands, anointing with oil, or with a bare word. There are several examples of the working of this gift, especially in the book of Acts:

- Acts 3:7—the account of the lame man at the Gate Beautiful; “And Peter took him by the right hand, and raised him up: and immediately his feet and his anklebones received strength. And leaping up, he stood, and began to walk.”
- Acts 5:12-16—And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people: and they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch. But of the rest durst no man join himself to them: howbeit the people magnified them; and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women: insomuch that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that, as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might overshadow some of them. And there also came together the multitude from the cities round about Jerusalem, bringing sick folk, and them that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.
- Acts 19:1.1-12—”And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: insomuch that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them and the evil spirits went out.”
- Acts 28:8—”The Father of Publius lay sick of fever and dysentery: unto whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laying his hands on him healed him. And when this was done, the rest also that had diseases in the islands came and were cured.”

This gift seems to have gradually diminished during New Testament times. Some references in the later epistles written by Paul seem to show that sickness is present where it should not have been if the gift of healing was working in full effect:

II Timothy 4:20—' Erastus remained at Corinth; but Trophimus I left at Miletus sick."

I Timothy 5:23—" Be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities."

Philippians 2: 26—"Since Epaphroditus longed after you all, and was sore troubled, because ye had heard that he was sick: for indeed he was sick nigh unto death."

II Corinthians 12: 7—"And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted overmuch."

For a complete refutation of all modern claims of divine healing and all modern "faith healers" the following references are suggested:

McCalls magazine for February, 1957, p. 39, article on "The Truth About Faith Healers."

The Modern Tongues and Healing Movement, by Carroll Stegall, and Carl C. Harwood, published by the Western Bible Institute, P. O. Box 4032, South Denver, Station, Denver 9, Colorado.

Modern Divine Healing, Waymon D. Miller, Old Paths Book Club, Rosemead, California; 1956

### **Answer These Questions**

1. Define the word "miracles" as in reference to the Spiritual gift—give two examples.
2. What is the difference between the gift of miracles and the gift of healing?
3. Why the plural, "gifts of healings"?
4. Name three ways healings could be effected.
5. What circumstances indicate that the gift of healing gradually diminished during New Testament times?

### **KINDS OF TONGUES**

Since there is considerable difference of opinion on this particular gift, more discussion will be given on this one than any of the others.

Paul is the only writer of the twenty-one Epistles of the New Testament that mentions the gift of tongues. He wrote not a word on the subject to the churches at Rome, Ephesus, Colossae, Thessalonica, Philippi, or Galatia. It is not mentioned in Timothy, Titus, Philemon or other of Paul's epistles. James does not mention it, neither does Peter in his two books, or John in his four books. This omission of reference to tongues seems strange indeed if the gift of tongues were an essential part of the Christian experience or was to be perpetuated in the church.

There is a Greek word used for tongues in the New Testament. This word is used in three senses, each of which might be a starting point to determine the meaning of the Charism, or "gift."

1. Primarily and literally the word is used in reference to the bodily organ. From this meaning some see in the gift an inarticulate utterance, the cry as of a brute creature in which the tongue moves while the lips refuse their office in making the sounds definite and distinct. This interpretation does not answer any of the facts of its usage in the New Testament.

2. The term may stand for the use of foreign words imparted. and half naturalized in Greek. This would be in accordance with the Greek meaning of "glossary". According to this usage then, the gift of tongues is speaking in highly poetic language. The speakers were in a great state of excitement and expressed themselves in mystic, figurative terms. To say that this sense forms the basis for the New Testament usage of the term, one would fail to recognize that the sense of the word in the New Testament was more likely to be determined by that which it bore in the Septuagint rather than by its meaning in the Greek historians or rhetoricians. This sense also fails to meet the phenomena of the second chapter of Acts.

3. The third use of the word comes from the Hellenistic Greek which corresponds to the Hebrew word lashouh which stands for speech and language, Genesis 10:5; Daniel 1:4. This sense most likely serves as

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a basis for the New Testament usage. This would make the gift of tongues the ability to speak in earthly languages.'

The New Testament provides the following references to the gift of tongues:

1. Acts 2:4, 6, 11, The gift here occurred on the day of Pentecost at the establishment of the church. The gift here seems to be one of the fulfillments of the prophecy of Joel (Joel 2:20; Acts 2:16).

2. Mark 16:17, The speaking in new tongues is one of the signs promised to follow those who believe. Too much emphasis, however, must not be put on the word “new” because some ancient authorities omit it.

3. Acts 10:46, The gift of tongues here was manifested at the inauguration of the Gospel to the Gentiles at the Household of Cornelius. On the day of Pentecost, the gift of speaking with tongues was used by the Jews in the presence of Jews and proselytes only, but here it is used by Gentiles in the presence of Jewish Christians. The purpose for the gift of tongues here seems to have been to show that God approved the giving of the Gospel to the Gentiles. It is known that the manifestation of tongues here was the same as on Pentecost from Peter’s rehearsal of this incident to the Jewish brethren at Jerusalem in Acts 11, especially 11:15, “And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning.” Both came as a result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

4. Acts 19:6, The gift of tongues was given here to the twelve at Ephesus through the laying on of the hands of the apostle Paul. This gift seems to have been proof of their acceptance of God and also emphasized that John’s baptism at that date was invalid.

5. I Corinthians 12:1-10, 30, The gift here was manifested in the public assembly of the church at Corinth. The gift here always needed an interpreter to make the meaning clear to others.

6. I Corinthians 13:8, Here Paul simply states that the gifts of tongues shall cease. In this same chapter in verse one, he states that the gift of tongues is inferior to love.

<sup>1</sup>Idea taken from McClintock and Strong, op. cit. vl. 10, p. 479

7. I Corinthians 14:2; 26-32, This reference shows that the gift was liable to abuse and misuse. A description of the proper use of this gift is given. Also it is shown here that tongues are of secondary importance to prophecy, and that they are for a sign not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving.

Two important differences should be noted in the Corinthian Glossolalia (the transliteration of the Greek for the gift of tongues) and the Pentecostal Glossolalia. The tongues on Pentecost did not require an interpreter whereas the Corinthian tongues did. The Pentecostal tongues were intelligible languages spoken to man, whereas the Corinthian tongues were spoken to God. (I Corinthians 14:2, “For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man understandeth, but in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.”)

There are two major opinions held respecting the gift of tongues. One, that it was what it seemed by its nature designed to be, a means of propagating the Gospel. The tongues were different earthly languages. The other opinion is that it was never used for the purpose of propagating the Gospel, but was used as a means for expressing devotion. It was an ecstatic utterance in an unintelligible jargon which was not for instruction and edification, but for adoration, wonder, and worship.

We quote noted commentators for both of these opinions. Arguments for the opinion that the gift of tongues was an ecstatic utterance are noted first:

“To speak with tongues is the gift of men who, rapt in ecstasy and no longer quite masters of their own reason and consciousness, pour forth their glowing spiritual emotions in strange utterances, rugged, dark, disconnected, quite unfitted to instruct or to influence the minds of others. The origin of the expression is apparently to be found in the fact that in Hebrew the tongue is spoken of as the leading instrument by which the praises of God are proclaimed. Psalms 34; 65:17; 125:2. The plural seems to refer to the various motions of the tongue.”<sup>1</sup>

“Speaking in tongues is an utterance proceeding from a state of unconscious ecstasy in the speaker and unintelligible to the hearer unless interpreted. It is an involuntary psalm like a prayer or song uttered from a spiritual trance; and in a peculiar language inspired by the Holy Spirit. This gift has nothing to do with the spread of the gospel among foreign peoples and in foreign languages, but purely an act of

worship for the edification of the speaker himself, and indirectly through interpretation for the hearers. It appeared in the house of Cornelius and in the Corinthian church as a means of edification for believers.”<sup>2</sup>

“The gift of tongues is the supreme spirit of the ecstatic utterer encompassed and penetrated by the Holy Spirit in adorning raptures of super-natural prayer soaring beyond the range of the rational apprehension, which fails to find its natural expression in speech (rational speech) or in logos begotten of spirit; accordingly it indeed is speech engendered of the mind, but in a tongue created of the spirit. One thing seems certain, that this extemporised creation and irrepressible utterance of unknown tongues was quite distinct from the speaking in foreign languages.”<sup>3</sup>

“Speaking in tongues had nothing to do with spread of the Gospel. It was an act of self devotion, an act of thanksgiving, praying, and singing within the Christian congregation by individuals who were wholly absorbed in communion with God and gave utterances to raptured feelings in broken, abrupt, rhapsodic, unintelligible words. It was emotional, not intellectual. It was the language of excited imagination, not of cool reflection. It was the language of the spirit of ecstasy as distinct from the language of understanding. The speaker was in a state of spiritual intoxication. ‘His tongue was a lyre on which the divine spirit played celestial chimes.’ He was unconscious, or only half conscious, and scarcely knew whether he was in body or out of body. To the unbeliever it sounded like a barbarous tongue, an uncertain sound of a trumpet, like a raving of a maniac.”

“The Pentecostal glossolalia cannot have been essentially different from the Corinthian. It was an act of worship, of thanksgiving and praise. The glossolalia began before the spectators arrived, before there was necessity of using foreign tongues.

<sup>1</sup>Thayer, J. H., *Greek English Lexicon of New Testament*; pg. 118

<sup>2</sup>Schaff, Philip, op. cit. p. 438

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 438

### **‘Cook, F. C., O~. cit. vl. 3, p. 333**

There was no need for foreign tongues since conquest of Alexander the Great. The Greek language was generally understood throughout the Roman empire, and the apostles scarcely ever needed any other. Greek was used by all the writers of the New Testament, even by James of Jerusalem, and in a way which shows that they had learnt it like other people, by early training and practice. There is no trace of miraculous knowledge of language after Pentecost.”<sup>2</sup>

“At Corinth no one understood the tongue, not even the speaker himself, for it seems to have been a rhapsody, an uncontrolled ecstatic outburst, and in case there was no one to interpret or explain it, the speaker was to hold his peace . .

<sup>2</sup>Schaff, Philip, op. cit. vi. 3, p. 333

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 237

### **Answer These Questions**

1. What does the fact that Paul is the only writer of the twenty-one Epistles to mention the gift of tongues indicate?
2. How does the second definition of the term “tongues” fail to meet the phenomena of the second chapter of Acts?
3. What is the third use of the word “tongues”?
4. There are seven references to the use of “tongues” in the New Testament. Please discuss in your own words three of the references.
5. What are the two opinions held respecting the gift of tongues?

“The tongues of this account cannot have signified the power to speak strange languages in missionary preaching, as many have inferred from the terms used in the account of the manifestation of the day of Pentecost. The Greek word implies that this ecstatic phenomenon was far from uniform; the new tongues of Mark 16:17 together with indications of Chapter 13:1 and 14 of this epistle, point to the breaking out of an exalted and mystical utterance varied at different times and places in its mode and

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attendant conditions, and in the impression it produced on the hearers.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Nicoll, W. R., *The Expositors Greek New Testament*, I Corinthians, II p. 889

“The word tongue does- not do full justice to the Greek original. The Greek word indicates the speaking tongue, the tongue in action. Paul speaks of Christians who received an extraordinary gift of the Holy Spirit, a charisma, to speak or to understand a language which did not have the ordinary human characteristics, a special language formed by the Spirit, unintelligible for ordinary people. The speaking in tongues, therefore, is the speaking of a miraculous spiritual language that had its own sounds. It cannot be determined whether ‘kinds’ refers to the contents or to the sounds. More than one says this miraculous language was the language spoken in paradise.”<sup>2</sup>

“It so happened that here on this occasion at Pentecost there were Jews from all parts of the world, so that someone would understand one tongue and some another without an interpreter such as was needed at Corinth. These tongues are identical in all four cases. They are not for edification or instruction, but for adoration and worship.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>*International Commentary*, I Corinthians, p. 288

<sup>3</sup>Robertson, A. T., *Word Pictures in New Testament*; Acts vi. 3

Next will be considered arguments for the other opinion, that tongues were different earthly languages. The following quotations from prominent commentators seem to sustain this position:

“Some say that new tongues mean ‘unheard of’ heavenly language, not earthly tongues. This adjective, ‘new’ never means new in the sense of ‘unheard of.’ This is the sense of the Greek word, an adjective never applied to the gift of tongues. This Greek word is always ‘new’ compared with what is ‘old’ or differing from the old. The Corinthians have their own language, which is old to them; and when they hear some of their own members speak in new languages, these are new to them because they are foreign languages, other than the one to which they are accustomed.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lenski, R. C., *op. cit.* p. 564 *if.*

“The experience of Pentecost must have served as the origin of the new and special meaning of the word ‘tongue’ in the New Testament. Paul would likely use the same word in the same sense. In absence of a distinct notice to the contrary, it is probable that the gift would manifest itself in the same form at Corinth as at Jerusalem. It is easier to conceive ‘divers kinds of tongues’ as pointing to differences of language than as belonging to utterances all equally wild and inarticulate. Corinth was a seaport, and was almost as much a polyglot community as Jerusalem.”<sup>2</sup>

“Why did God give this gift to the Corinthian Church? Simply because of all places in Greece, Corinth was the one most suited for its exercise; for, on account of its position, having two ports opening to two seas, and its commercial importance, it was thronged with persons of the most varied personalities. This gift was given to certain members of the Corinthian churches solely for the purposes of instruction, that they might speak to the crowds of foreigners which thronged its streets and places of public resort, in their own tongues, the wonderful works of God. Now with this agrees the fact that all the four places in which this gift was bestowed were the resort of men of all nations by whom the reality of the gift could be at once tested. The four places are: Jerusalem, Caesarea (pronounced to be far more a Gentile than a Jewish city, having cohorts of legions from all parts of the empire in garrison there), Ephesus, the resort of pilgrims and traders from all the Asiatic provinces, and Corinth. If Christians received this gift in such places as Philippi or Thessalonica, it would, humanly speaking, be thrown away. The miracle could be of use to no one, for the speaker would speak a language which no one in the place could understand; whereas if a Christian of Corinth or Ephesus received this gift, he would find persons in every street on whose behalf he could exercise it.



<sup>2</sup>McClintock and Strong, op. cit. vi. 1.0, p. 479 if.

I Corinthians 14:22, “Tongues are a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not.” If an unbeliever (a foreigner) heard another speak to him with great apparent earnestness in a language not intelligible unto him, he would put it down to madness, verse 23. But if the same foreigner was assured that the speaker knew but a short time before not one word of his (the foreigner’s) native language, and yet heard himself addressed fluently by him in that language, it would be to the hearer as it was to multitudes on the day of Pentecost, the most overwhelming sign of the truth of the Message.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sadler, M. F. Sadler, op. cit. p. 511 if. (Acts)

It is interesting to note quotations from two prominent church fathers as evidence that the gift of tongues was used for the dissemination of the Gospel:

Irenaeus, Luke relates that the spirit descended on the disciples after the ascension of the Lord on the day of Pentecost in order that all nations might be enabled to enter into life; wherefore they united in all languages in praising God, the Holy Spirit bringing distant tribes into unity and offering the first fruits of all nations to God.”

Origen, “I suppose that he was made a debtor to different nations because, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, he had received the gift of speaking in the languages of all nations, as he himself also said, ‘I speak in tongues more than ye all.’”<sup>2</sup>

Irenaeus lived within 100 years of the day of Pentecost. Origen lived 50 or 60 years later. These lived 1700 years nearer to the times of the New Testament than those who assert that the gift of tongues was never used for the spreading of the Gospel and was never earthly languages. References can be found in the works of church fathers who lived a century or so later that the gift of tongues was used in spreading the Gospel.<sup>3</sup>

More quotations are given to further sustain this position:

“Each one began to speak that which he had not acquired, and yet it was a real language, and understood by those from various lands familiar with them. It was not jargon, but intelligible language. Jesus had said that the Gospel would go to all nations and here various tongues of earth were spoken.”<sup>4</sup>

“The other tongues therefore are, according to the text, to be considered as absolutely nothing else than languages, which were different from the native language of the speakers.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>ibid. p. 511, quoted from Eusebius 5, chapter 7

<sup>2</sup>ibid. quoted from Wordsworth

<sup>3</sup>ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Robertson, A. I., op. cit. vi. on Acts p. 21

<sup>5</sup>Meyer, H. W., Handbook on Acts of Apostles; p. 45

### Answer These Questions

1. Why do some people feel speaking in tongues has nothing to do with the spread of the Gospel?
2. The Pentecostal “glossolalia” was indeed different from the Corinthian—show how.
3. How is the Greek word “new” used in the New Testament?
4. Why was Corinth most suited for the exercise of the gift of tongues?

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5. Show how I Corinthians 14:22 indicates the gift of tongues was a language.

## 6. What is the conclusion of the church fathers?

“The speaker with tongues, exercising his spiritual gift, might indeed speak the divine truths or mysteries of God; but speaking them in a foreign language [emphasis mine, R.H.] he would be understood only by God and himself, and so would only edify, etc., himself.”<sup>1</sup>

“The speaker with a gift of tongues was able to speak in various languages. The gift of tongues was designed among other things to aid Christians in proclaiming the Gospel to the barbarous peoples in their own language. When used for this purpose it was a blessing, but to employ it for the sake of vain display in addressing those who could not understand the language employed, was to make it a curse.”<sup>2</sup>

“The idea is that the church would usually speak the same language with the people among whom they dwelt; and if they made use of foreign languages which were unintelligible to their visitors, it would leave the impression that the church was a bedlam.”<sup>3</sup>

“Tongues are foreign human languages. Any speaker with a tongue may easily know in advance whether someone is present in the assembly who understands the particular language which the Spirit communicates to him. Previous tests and experiences place this beyond question. This applies to each of the two or three speakers who are allowed by Paul at any one service. Each may speak a different foreign language. Each will know the name of the particular language which the Spirit grants him to speak. A glance tells him whether an interpreter is present or not. If none is at hand, he remains silent. Such interpreters will have interpreted before and will thus be known for their ability by all.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>McGarvey, J. W., *The Standard Bible Commentary* Thess. Cor. Gal. Rom. p. 134

<sup>2</sup>Boles, H. Leo, *Commentary on I Corinthians*, p. 211

<sup>3</sup>Barnes, Albert, *op. cit.* I Corinthians, p. 609-610

<sup>4</sup>Lenski, R. C. H., *op. cit.* I Corinthians, p. 269

“My understanding of the ‘tongues’ described in the New Testament is that they always were in a language understood by the people. That was certainly true at Pentecost. I see no reason for believing that some sort of ‘ecstatic’ tongue, understood by no one present, but necessitating a miraculous interpreter is referred to in Corinthians. I cannot think of God using a circuitous route to enlighten people, when a direct path could be employed—as on Pentecost. That subterfuge explanation that the ‘gifts of tongues’ was a heavenly jargon indicating some special favor granted the speaker originated with some hypocrites like the founder of Mormonism.”<sup>1</sup>

In view of all the foregoing facts and comments presented, it is the opinion of the author of this thesis that the following conclusion can be made: All manifestations of the gift of tongues are essentially the same. Tongues were spoken in intelligible human languages and were used for the propagation and the dissemination of the Gospel.

The use of the term “unknown” tongue in I Corinthians 14:4 in the King James translation is one of the many reasons why some have concluded that the gift of tongues is an ecstatic, incomprehensible sort of utterance. This conclusion becomes untenable when the fact is pointed out that the word “unknown” is not in the original Greek text, but is merely an addition of the King James translators.

<sup>1</sup>Walker, W. R., *Christian Standard*; quoted by G. R. Phillips in Thesis, p. 11(1)

According to Patristic writings (the early church Fathers), by the time of Chrysostom this gift ceased. Since that time, however, counterfeits of this gift have appeared from time to time in periods of special religious excitement:

1. Among the Camisards and prophets of the Cevennes in France during the seventeenth century.
2. Among the early Quakers and Methodists.
3. The Mormons in the early part of their movement.
4. Among the Readers in Sweden—1841-1843.

5. In Irish Revivals of 1859.

6. Among the Irvingites or the Catholic Apostolic Church— 183 1.

## 7. Among various Pentecostal and Holiness sects of today.

A man by the name of Bennet wrote a work on *The Church's Broken Unity* in which he devoted one section to the exposure of the pretended gifts of the Irvingites. His exposure aptly describes, and is applicable not only to the Irvingites but to all who have claimed this gift since Apostolic times:

“The gift of tongues claimed by modern Irvingites has been said to be illustrative of the gift of tongues of the Apostolic age. Now first, out of the eight persons who were averred so to have spoken, one, Mr. Baxter, admitted that he was deceived. Another admitted that it was no gift at all, but that she was gradually led on to imposture. Again a Mr. Pilkington, who was for some time among them, set down various sounds which he declares he heard. Of one he says, that it burst forth with an astonishing and terrible crash. He says that it gives some idea of the sound with which the tongue was delivered by him, if ‘cras-cran-cran-crash’ were uttered with a sudden and rapid vociferation. Mr. Pilkington explains some of these words as broken English, ‘Holimoth Holif Awthaw’ being ‘Holy Most Holy Father.’ When one of the speakers of the preceding jabbering was asked if she had spoken English, she did not deny it, but whispered to her neighbor, I didn’t speak in English, did I?”

Mary Campbell, one of the original claimants of the gift, not only uttered such sounds but wrote down what she intended to be written characters representing them. These fragments of writings were submitted to many. These characters were those which one sees on the large Chinese tea chests, some memory of which was probably floating in Mary Campbell’s mind. She did not profess to understand the characters which she traced. No one else could understand them either. Such things we are told illustrate the Pentecostal action of the Spirit of God.”<sup>1</sup>

Following are descriptions of alleged occurrences of speaking in tongues among the Camisards of France and the Cevenal Prophets:

“The Camisards of France in the 18th Century were a group of persecuted Protestants. They seemed to be able after repeated fasts of three days each, to receive a ‘gift,’ sink to the ground as in death, and after a time rise up, speaking in good French (a language supposedly completely unknown to them) for as long as two hours, and then to come out of their ‘trance’ remembering nothing of what they had done. All kinds of miracles attended them. Lights in the sky guided them to places of safety, voices sang encouragement to them, shots and wounds were often harmless; they shed tears of blood, and they subsisted without food or speech for nine days.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sadler, M. F., op. cit. p. 517 (Acts)

<sup>2</sup>Encyclopedia Britannica, 1951, vi. 4, p. 666, quoted from G. R. Phillips in Thesis, p. 24

“The Cevenal Prophets, who were in France in the latter part of the 17th Century, claimed spiritual gifts. The persons affected were men and women, the old and the young. Very many were children of nine or ten years of age. They were sprung from the people, their enemy’s said, from the dregs of the people, ignorant and uncultured for the most part; and unable to read or write. Such persons would suddenly fall backwards, and, while extended at full length on the ground, undergo strange and apparently involuntary contortions: their chests would seem to heave, their stomachs to inflate. On coming gradually out of this condition, they appeared instantly to regain the power of speech. Beginning often in a voice interrupted by sobs, they soon poured forth a torrent of words—cries for mercy, calls to repentance, exhortations, denunciations, and prophecies of coming judgment. From the mouths of those that were little more than babes came texts of Scriptures and discourses in good and intelligible French, such as they never used in their conscious hours. When the trance ceased, they declared that they remembered nothing of what had occurred, or of what they said. In rare cases they retained a general and vague impression, but nothing more.”<sup>1</sup>

The following description of the Cane Ridge Meeting in Kentucky during the beginning of the Restoration Movement in America shows that some claimed to have talked in tongues there:

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“There were 25,000 people gathered and the noise was like that of Niagara Falls. Seven ministers were preaching from different places. At no time was the ground less than half covered with the victims of the religious experience. Some could not move or speak and rescue teams, called ‘bearers of the slain,’ were carrying them away. Some talked but could not move. Some beat the earth with their heels. Some, shrieking in agony, bounded about like live fish out of water. Many lay down and rolled over for hours at a time; others rushed wildly about over stumps and benches, and then plunged, shouting, ‘lost, lost’ in the forest. Many talked in Tongues [emphasis mine, R.H), some had the ‘holy laughs’ others the ‘barks.’ These fell on all fours rolling about and gathering at the foot of a tree yelping, barking, and snapping like dogs. This exercise was called treeing the devil.”<sup>2</sup>

These alleged occurrences simply do not answer the same tests, were not done for the same purposes, and were not induced the same way as the New Testament miracles and especially the gift of tongues.

<sup>1</sup>Dalton, R. C., *Tongues Like as of Fire*; p. 17, quoted from *ibid.*

<sup>2</sup>*The Ligtorian*, p. 156, quoted from G. R. Phillips, *op. cit.* p. 24 *if.*

### **Answer These Questions**

1. What did A. T. Robertson say about the meaning of the word “tongues.”
2. What did H. W. Meyer say?
3. What did J. W. McGarvey say?
4. What did R. C. H. Lenski say?
5. What shall we say of post-apostolic occurrences of speaking in tongues?

### **INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES**

This gift consisted in the ability to make known to others, especially to those in a congregational meeting, the meaning of that which is spoken by one possessing the gift of talking in tongues. Lenski has the following to say concerning this gift:

“One who possessed this gift was one who naturally knew a foreign language that was used by those who spoke with tongues, and who then used his natural knowledge in giving the interpretation to the congregation. Interpretation is the last and thus the lowest of all the gifts. It utilizes a natural ability by sanctifying it and employing it for spiritual ends.”

This gift is mentioned only in connection with the church at Corinth. No doubt this gift was manifested at other places, but no mention is made of it.”

(Ronnie Hanna)

## **AN EXEGESIS OF I CORINTHIANS CHAPTERS TWELVE, THIRTEEN AND FOURTEEN**

### **Outline of Chapters Twelve, Thirteen and Fourteen**

#### **SPIRITUAL GIFTS 12:1—14:40**

Occasion for this section was misunderstanding and abuse of spiritual gifts. Those claiming most important gifts displayed them to humiliation of those with lesser gifts.

1. Heathen oracles compared with Christian revelation, 12:1-3. The oracles pretended revelation through idols, but “dumb” idols revealed nothing: only inspired men could say “Jesus is Lord.”
2. Unity and purpose of spiritual gifts, 12:4-11.
  - a. Relation of the gifts to the Godhead, 4-6. To the Spirit— gifts, manifestation, to Christ— ministrations, or means of working; to God—workings, or evidence of divine activity in the church. This unity of gifts was against divisive use of them.
  - b. The gifts and their accomplishments, 7-11. They were nine in number, classified as follows:
    - (1) Those revealing the Gospel; “Words of wisdom”— this gift used by apostles and prophets; “word of knowledge” —to teach revealed truths by inspired teachers; “prophecy” — to predict, see Acts 11:28; 21:8-il; “Interpretation of tongues” —an essential in revealing truth “discerning of spirits”—ability to distinguish false teachers from true, I John 4:1.

- (2) Those confirming the Gospel: “faith”—conviction they could work miracles, see Matt. 17:19-21; I Cor. 13:2; “healings”—power to restore the sick, Acts 5:15, 16; James 5:14,15; “miracles”—examples in Acts 5:1-11; 13:8-11; “tongues”—ability to present the Gospel in foreign languages, as on Pentecost, Acts 2:5-11.
3. Unity in using these gifts, 12:12-27.
    - a. Organic unity, 12, 13. As the human body “is one,” so is the church; for by “one Spirit,” directing through His word, we were all immersed into the one body.
    - b. Co-operative unity, 14-27. This, too, illustrated by the human body. Thus the sinful misuse of the gifts was exposed; they were given for the common good.
  4. Gradation of gifts according to importance, 28-30. By ranking the spiritually gifted men in this order, precedence of each is settled.  
A more excellent way than pride and strife about spiritual gifts is the manifestation of love.
  5. Superiority of love in comparison with all spiritual gifts, 13:1-13.
    - a. The essential of love, 1:3: in speech—gift of tongues; in knowledge—to teach and predict; in faith—to work miracles; in giving—of goods and person.
    - b. The conduct of love, 4-7. It is personified in order to set forth its beauty and excellence in human relations.
    - c. The final values of love, 8-13. The following facts stand out:
      - (1) Prophecies, tongues, knowledge—and all the rest of the gifts—shall pass away when the “perfect” is come, namely, the Gospel fully revealed and the church fully instructed, 8-10. The gifts came into the church through the apostles and went out with them.
      - (2) Progressive revelation to and instruction of the church during the apostolic age illustrated by development of childhood into manhood and by reflection of a mirror, 11, 12.
      - (3) Instead of spiritual gifts now we have faith, hope, love—the results from these gifts, 13. “Faith” is based on testimony of the Spirit, Rom. 10:17. “Hope” of the resurrection will be accomplished by the Spirit, Rom. 8:11. “Love” of God is imparted by the Spirit, Rom. 5:5, is the character of God, I John 4:16, hence eternal.
  6. This chapter corrects the selfish, vain-glorious display of foreign tongues in the church at Corinth.
    - a. comparison of prophesying and speaking in tongues, 1-5. Along with love, spiritual gifts were desirable, but prophecy was superior to foreign tongues, because it edified (built up) the church in a known language.
    - b. The unprofitableness of speaking in a language not understood, 6-19. This is illustrated by sound without sense. Therefore, inspired speaking, praying, singing in a foreign tongue must be interpreted, or the uninstructed could not say “Amen.
    - c. The significance of tongues and prophesying, 20-25. Misuse of gift of tongues was childish—a severe reproof to wise-ones in Corinth. Tongues had a twofold purpose: (a) ability to preach in foreign languages without learning them, and (b) to prove the Gospel of divine source. As the Assyrian tongue was a sign to unbelieving Israel that their captivity was from God, so tongues in the church was a sign “to the unbelieving” “that God is among you,” believers. However, tongues must be interpreted, or unbelievers will say “ye are mad.” But intelligent prophetic preaching will convince.
  7. Proper decorum in public worship, 14:26-40.
    - a. Number and order of speakers, 26-33. Edification of the church the one objective, hence there must be intelligent speech and division of time in use of the spiritual gifts, or confusion would result—a thing not attributive to God.



b. Women to keep silent in the assembly, 33-36. This for two reasons: (1) The law demands subjection, Gen. 3:16; Num. 30:3-12. That is still in force, I Cor. 11:3. (2) Local custom, “shameful for a woman.” Not so in the West. Even in early church were exceptions, Acts 21:9; I Cor. 11:5.

8. Final word on spiritual gifts, 37-40. His teaching is by authority of Christ, received by those willing to learn. Moreover, there is to be decent and orderly exercise of those gifts. (from *The New Testament Epistles*, by Victor F. Hoven)

### **Text 12:1-3**

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that when ye were Gentiles ye were led away unto those dumb idols, howsoever ye might be led. Wherefore I make known unto you, that no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith, Jesus is anathema; and no man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit.

### **Thought Questions 12:1-3**

Please attempt an answer to these questions before you read our comment.

1. The word “gifts” is supplied by the translators. What synonym could you supply?
2. Why did Paul feel a need for writing on this subject? i.e., what were the conditions in the church at Corinth which prompted such a discussion?
3. Aren’t the Christians at Corinth still Gentiles? Why the use of the word “Gentiles” as in v. 2?
4. Who led them away to the idols?
5. Why call the idols “dumb”? Does this mean “stupid”?
6. Why were they so easily led?
7. How did idols relate to the subject of spiritual gifts?
8. Please notice that v. 3 is a conclusion of v. 2—what is the premise of this conclusion?
9. Who was saying “Jesus is accursed” or “anathema”?
10. What is meant by saying “speaking in the Spirit of God”?
11. Evidently someone was claiming to speak by the Spirit of God, and was not—who was it?
12. In what sense are we to understand vs. 3b? i.e., is this a reference to supernaturally saying “Jesus is Lord,” or is it a reference to the ordinary confession of His Lordship? What is the point of the statement?

### **Paraphrase 12:1-3**

(BY JAMES MACKNIGHT)

1. Now, concerning spiritual men, and concerning the nature, the excellency, and the use of their gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.
2. Ye all know, that formerly ye were blind heathens, led away to worship idols that are dumb, just as ye happened to be led, by education, or custom, or the artifices of your priests.
3. Wherefore, that ye may distinguish the inspirations of God from those of evil spirits, I inform you, that no one, speaking by the Spirit of God, pronounceth Jesus a deceiver who was justly put to death; and that no one, speaking by a supernatural impulse, can declare Jesus Lord, except he be really inspired by the Holy Ghost.

### **Comment 12:1-3**

The use and purpose of spiritual gifts is very well expressed by J. W. McGarvey and Philip Y. Pendleton in their commentary:

“In the early church the Spirit of God, fulfilling the predictions of prophecy (Joel 2:28 ff, Acts 2:17-21), and the promise of the Lord (Mark 16:17-18; Acts 1:8), beginning on the day of Pentecost, endowed certain members with miraculous gifts. These were needful in that day:

1. They aided the evangelists and missionaries to propagate the faith in new fields with greater speed.
2. They assured weak converts that God was indeed in that church for which they had abandoned their former religions.

3. They edified the church, and gave it that body of perfect revealed truth which has been preserved and made permanent in the New Testament.” (pp. 119, 120)

Perhaps it would be better to use the word “matters” in place of “~gifts” in v. 1, so the translation would read, “Now concerning spiritual matters, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.” It is so translated by a number of commentators as well as translators. Paul wants to instruct them on all matters spiritual whether relating to the use of supernatural powers or not. His particular concern is in the proper use of the gift of tongues, but he wishes to lay a broad foundation upon which to build his instruction.

The first principle to be learned and applied relates to the confession of Jesus as Lord.

Settle it in your mind—idols have no supernatural power or approval. This can be certain because their priests and followers deny the deity and Lordship of Jesus. When you were Gentiles (ye are now children of Abraham by faith—Cf. Gal. 3:26,27), you were easily influenced by these false teachers—remember, the idols before whom you stood were as dumb as the substance out of which they were made. If they seemed to speak, it was by the trickery of the priests who manipulated them. These priests can not possibly have the power or approval of God for they reject and blaspheme our Saviour.

It is also true that if anyone confesses that Jesus is Lord he is doing it either by the direct influence of the Holy Spirit—i.e., the Spirit speaking through him, or by the full approval of the Holy Spirit.

Whatever confusion may reign in your mind because of the misuse and abuse of these supernatural powers, please do not associate such powers with your former idolatrous worship.

#### **Text 12:4-11**

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal. For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit: to another faith, in the same Spirit; and to another workings of miracles; and to another prophecy; and to another discerning of Spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; and to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will.

#### **Thought Questions 12:4-11**

13. Please notice and define the three important words: *gifts*—*ministrations*—*workings*.
14. Notice the person who controls “gifts” —the person who controls “ministrations” —the person who controls “workings” —explain the reason for attributing them to different divine persons.
15. Define the word “manifestation” as here used.
16. Who is to profit by the use of Spiritual gifts?
17. We have defined these nine spiritual gifts—could you now define in your own words these gifts?
18. Who gives Spiritual gifts? For what purpose?
19. Was there some special need or advantage in granting such gifts to the church at Corinth?

#### **Paraphrase 12:4-11**

4. Now, there are diversities of gifts, but they all proceed from the same Spirit: so that in respect of their origin, the spiritual gifts are all equally divine.
5. And there are diversities of ministries, for which the different gifts are bestowed; but the same Lord is served by these ministries: so that in respect of the Lord whom they serve, the spiritual men are all equally honorable.
6. And there are diversities of inworkings on the minds of the spiritual men, but it is the same God who worketh inwardly all supernatural impressions in all: so that in respect of the authority by which they act, the spiritual men are all equal.
7. And to each is given the gift by which the presence of the Spirit with him is manifested, not for advancing his honor, but for promoting the advantage of all: so that in respect to the end for which they exercise their spiritual gifts, the spiritual men are all equal.
8. Now to one indeed, through the indwelling of the Spirit, is given the word of wisdom; the whole doctrine of the gospel: and to another the word of knowledge; the complete knowledge of the formed revelations recorded in the writings of Moses and the prophets, according to the indwelling of the

## SHOULD I SPEAK IN TONGUES?

same Spirit.

9. And to another, such a firm faith in the divine original of the gospel, by the same Spirit as enableth him boldly to preach and confirm it by miracles; and to another the gifts of healing diseases by the same Spirit.
10. And to another the inworking of miracles: and to another prophecy: and to another the gift of discerning spirits: and to another the faculty of speaking divers kinds of foreign languages: and to another the faculty of interpreting what is spoken in foreign languages by inspiration, for the edification and exhortation, and comfort of the church.
11. Now all these gifts and powers, the one and the same Spirit of God inworketh in the spiritual men, distributing to each his proper gifts, as he himself pleaseth, for the general advantage.

#### **Comment 12:4-11**

This section needs special care in understanding—there are three persons and three responsibilities to be considered. The three persons are: (1) The Holy Spirit; (2) The Lord Jesus Christ; (3) God the Father.

Each of these persons has a responsibility in the operation of the supernatural gifts:

- (1) The gifts have their origin in the Holy Spirit. He it is who prompts and provides for their operation.
- (2) The gifts have their distribution in and from the Lord Jesus (Cf. Rom. 12:6,7; Eph. 4:11,12; I Pet. 4:10,11). Under the controlling hand of Jesus certain persons are granted appropriate supernatural powers even as decided by our Lord.
- (3) The gifts have their power in God. God our Father is the source of power for the operation of these gifts.

Please read very carefully verses six through eight with the above comments in mind.

The manifestations or expressions of the Holy Spirit through certain persons are next to be discussed. These manifestations, (supernatural abilities granted to the Holy Spirit within men) are nine in number:

1. *Wisdom* (“word” or “discourse” of wisdom): Some prefer to define this as the ability to reveal divine truth; others believe it relates to the ability to understand and apply truth after it has been revealed.
2. *Knowledge* (“word” or “discourse” of knowledge): Is knowledge the body of truth and wisdom the ability to interpret it? We believe it is. The “discourse of knowledge,” then, would be the supernaturally imparted information. It makes little difference which emphasis is here used—the facts stand that through the Holy Spirit wisdom and knowledge were given to certain men.
3. *Faith*: This has reference to the exercise of faith. (Cf. Matt. 17:19,20; 13:2). Such persons could believe God for certain supernatural action that would not even occur to the ordinary believer.
4. *Healing*: This had special reference to the restoration of the sick. (Cf. Acts 5:15,16; Jas. 5:14,15.) Those who had this gift evidently were limited to this one miracle.
5. *Miracles*: The general gift “. . . it included acts of judgment as well as mercy.” The cases of Paul and Elymas (Acts 5:1-11) and Peter with Ananias and Sapphira are cited as examples of the exercise of this gift.
6. *Prophecy*: This would seem to overlap the gift of wisdom and knowledge—the distinction must be in the power of foretelling future events. An example would be the prophet Agabus. (Cf. Acts 11:28; 21 :9-11.)
7. *Discerning of Spirits*: The supernatural ability to tell when a man was speaking or writing by divine inspiration.
8. *Divers kinds of tongues*: There is disagreement over this expression as to whether it refers to different languages or not. By reading an earlier portion of this lesson, the student will know our reasons for believing the divers tongues here do indeed refer to various languages.
9. *Interpretation of tongues*: What Mr. Hanna said earlier we say here—”This gift consisted in the ability to make known to others, especially to those in a congregational meeting the meaning of that which is spoken by one possessing the gift of talking in tongues.”

The Holy Spirit is the origin of each of these gifts—He empowered each gifted person even as it seemed best to Him. No glory could be claimed by one gifted person above another inasmuch as the power is of the Spirit and not of man.

#### **Text 12:12-31**

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, it is not therefore not of the body.

(I Cor. 12:17-31): If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now they are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee: or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary: and those parts of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness; whereas our comely parts have no need: but God tempered the body together, giving more abundant honor to that part which lacked; that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But desire earnestly the greater gifts. And moreover a most excellent way show I unto you.

#### **Thought Questions 12:12-31**

20. Please explain the use of the name “Christ” in 12:12.
21. Why the need for the emphasis upon unity as indicated in 12:12?
22. Does 12:13 teach Holy Spirit baptism for every believer or Christian? If not, what does it teach?  
Please remember our discussion of this point in an earlier lesson—please do some work on this point.
23. What two bodies are under consideration in this whole section?
24. What members of the Lord’s body in Corinth were giving special trouble?
25. Notice v. 15—why would the foot become dissatisfied with being a foot? What is the point of the verse?
26. Is Paul attempting to show the importance of each member, or of each supernatural gift?
27. Paul shows the interdependence of each member—point out where and how.
28. Specify some of the members of the human body which seem to be more feeble.”
29. In the completion of the analogy who would be “the more feeble” members of the Corinthian church?  
Please do not forget that the use and abuse of Spiritual gifts is the subject of the chapter.
30. What are “the comely parts” of the body which have no need of honor?
31. What body is under consideration in 12:25b? Which “body” in 12:24b?
32. What “honor” is in view in v. 12:26?
33. If the church is the body of Christ, how can it be divided into warring denominational groups?
34. In what sense are we to understand the word “set” in 12:28?
35. Why would apostles be “first” in the body?
36. Who are the “teachers”? Cf. Eph. 4:11,12.
37. Are we to understand that 12:28-30 is an abbreviation of what was discussed in detail in 12:1-11?
38. In the order of importance where does Paul place the gift of tongues? Where is it placed today in the churches that claim present-day exercise of these gifts? Why?
39. What are “helps” and “governments”?
40. If all do not possess these gifts, who does? Why?
41. What are the greater “gifts” (please notice this word is plural).

#### **Paraphrase 12:12-31**

12. For as the human body is one body, although it consist of many members, and all the members of that

one body, though many, are still one body, by the offices which each member performs for the preservation of the whole, so also is the body of Christ, the church: it is one body consisting of many members.

13. For indeed with the gifts of one Spirit, we all have been baptized into one body or church, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether slaves or freemen, and are all equally entitled to the privileges of that one body, and derive equal honor from them; and all have been made to drink in the Lord's supper of one spirit of faith and love, by which the one body is animated.
14. Since therefore the human body consists not of one member, but of many members, whose powers are different and offices various,
15. If the foot, which treads the ground, and is often covered with dirt, envying the hand, shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not a member of the body; is it for this not a member of the body, and freed from performing its proper function?
16. And if the ear, because it is inferior to the eye, the noblest member of the body, shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not a member of the body; is it for this not a member of the body, and freed from its proper function?
17. The absurdity of all the members desiring to be the chief members is evident, since thus the body being deprived of the inferior members would quickly perish. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?
18. But now, in opposition to this folly, God hath placed the members, every one of them in the body so as to form one whole, and hath assigned to each member its own office, as he hath pleased.
19. Besides, if all were one member, where were the body? That exquisite piece of mechanism, which is capable of supporting itself by the functions of its several parts.
20. But now, indeed, there are many members, which being aptly joined together make but one body, whose happiness results from the existence of all its members.
21. Therefore the eye cannot say to the hand, the chief instrument of action, I have no need of thee; nor in like manner can the head, in which the eyes and ears are placed, say to the feet which support the whole body, I have no need of you.
22. Nay, those members of the body which seem to be more feeble, because unable to endure external injury, such as the brain, the lungs, and the intestines, are much more necessary to its subsistence than the stronger members.
23. And those which we think are less graceful members of the body, on account of their place and use, around them we throw more abundant honour, by clothing them with splendid apparel. And thus our uncomely members have more abundant comeliness, by our care in adorning and defending them.
24. But our more strong and comely members have no need of defense and ornament. However, God hath united all the members of the body together, by giving to the members which are naturally weak and without beauty, more abundant honour, through their greater efficacy in the nourishment and preservation of the body.
25. This he hath done, that there may be no mutiny in the body, but that the members may have the same anxious care one for another; and particularly that the belly and other inactive members, by performing their functions, may strengthen the hands and feet, the active members.
26. And so, the whole being united, if one member is diseased or disabled, all the members jointly suffer, by losing the assistance of the disabled member; or if one member be properly clothed and gratified, all the rest derive advantage from its welfare, and jointly partake of its joy.
27. Now, ye being his church, are the body of Christ, and each of you members in part; and should apply to yourselves what I have written concerning the natural body and its members.
28. Therefore, these indeed God hath placed in the church as chief members: First, apostles, who being endowed with the word of wisdom, from them all must receive the knowledge of the gospel; Secondly, the superior prophets, who, possessing the word of knowledge, are qualified to interpret the ancient revelations; Thirdly, teachers, who boldly preach the gospel through the world, and confirm it by miracles: Next, those who communicate to others the spiritual powers: Then those who possess the gifts of healing diseases: Helpers, who, speaking by inspiration to the edification of the church, are fitted to assist the superior teachers, and to help the faith and joy of others: Directors, who, by the gift of discerning spirits, are fitted to direct the church: Lastly, persons who, having the gift of speaking different kinds of foreign languages, can preach to every nation in its own language.

29. Are all apostles? Are all superior prophets? Are all teachers? Have all the gift of communicating miraculous powers?
30. Have all the gifts of healing diseases? Do all speak foreign languages? Do all interpret what is spoken in these languages? No. The church is made up of many members, each of which has its own power and office.
31. Now, ye earnestly desire the chief gifts, that ye may become the most honorable persons in the church. But I will shew you a more excellent way of obtaining honour.

#### Comment 12:12-31

We reproduce V. F. Hoven's outline here to keep before us the analysis of this passage: Unity in using these gifts, 12:12-27.

- a. *Organic unity*, 12,13. As the human body "is one," so is the church; for by "one Spirit," directing through His word, we were all immersed into one body.
- b. *Co-operative unity*, 14-27. This, too, illustrated by the human body. Thus the sinful misuse of the gifts was exposed; they were given for the common good.

Gradation of gifts according to importance, 28-31.

By ranking the spiritually gifted men in this order, precedence of each is settled.

A more excellent way than pride and strife about spiritual gifts is the manifestation of love.

We shall now take up a very plain verse by verse explanation of the text based on the above analysis:

**Vs. 12.** This verse contains the proposition or point to be developed in verses 13 through 31. This is a beautiful and powerful analogy between the human body and the church, the body of Christ. Please do not forget that these chapters are not a discussion of Spiritual gifts per se — but rather a discussion of the proper use of them. There are many members in the human body —and they all have a separate function, but there is no disagreement or lack of unity. There is another body—it is the body of Christ—His church. In it there are many members. Does this mean there must be disagreement and contention? Not if we all recognize we are one body. We owe our existence not to ourselves but to our relationship to each other in the one body. Christ is in this world only to the extent that He is seen and heard through His body the church.

**Vs. 13.** How did we become one body? We did so by our baptism—in which we died and our life was hid with Christ in God. We lost our identity and became a new man in Christ Jesus. How can there be jealousy and envy when we are all members one of another in the body of Christ, His church? Does this verse teach Holy Spirit baptism for all Christians? We like the words of *Kappa* in *Lard's Quarterly*, Vol. I, p. 432 ff:

*First.* Is it not true, that we are brought into the one body by immersion in the Spirit? If so, it is certainly not proved by the passage we have been considering; for, as we have just seen, this passage, even with the rendering in question, contains an entirely different proposition. Again, by the rule which requires the term immersion, when not otherwise limited, to be understood as immersion in water, it is certain that in the latter sense, we are immersed into Jesus Christ, and into His death. This is the one immersion which brings us in the unity of the Spirit into the one body. Moreover, it is certain that neither of the two immersions in the Holy Spirit which are expressly so styled in the Scriptures (Pentecost and the house of Cornelius) brought its subjects into the one body. The apostles constituted a part of the body of Christ before they were immersed in the Spirit; and Cornelius and his friends were immersed into the one body, born out of water into the kingdom, *after* they had been immersed in the Spirit. Now, how is it possible for us to maintain that all are brought into the one body by immersion in the Spirit, in face of the fact that this is not true of the only persons who were unquestionably so immersed? Even if we had an express declaration that immersion in the Spirit brings us into one body, we would find extreme difficulty, if not an impossibility, in attempting to reconcile it with these facts.

*Second.* Is not the Baptist hypothesis the true one—that we are all first in the one Spirit, and afterwards, by immersion in water, brought into the one body? If so, we must find the historical facts



upon the subject in harmony with this idea. But we find the apostles all in the one body before they were immersed in the Spirit; and we find the twelve disciples in Ephesus immersed by Paul “into the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 19:5-6), after which Paul laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. And lest these should be considered anomalous cases, it was some days, if not weeks, after the Samaritans had been immersed by Philip, that the Holy Spirit came upon them in the answer to the prayer of Peter and John: “for as yet he was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 8:14-17). In all these cases the Baptist idea is reversed; so it appeared to Paul and Peter in reference to all other cases; for Paul says: “Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Gal. 4:6); and Peter commands, “Repent and be immersed for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

We now proceed to the inquiry, what is the real meaning of the Greek expression *En Heni Pneumati* rendered by the writer, *in one Spirit*, and in the common version, *by one Spirit*. That *en* means *in*, and must be so rendered when there is nothing to rule otherwise, cannot be denied. And that the Greek expression *En Heni Pneumati* standing alone, should be rendered *in one Spirit*, is equally undeniable. But *En* is sometimes rendered *by*, and must be so, when either the context, or the harmony of Scriptures statement requires it. If we were to consult the context alone, there would be found nothing in either the grammatical or logical structure of the sentence to forbid the use of it. But we have already seen that other facts and statements in the New Testament forbid the idea expressed by the rendering, “in one Spirit we were all immersed into one body.” This alone is sufficient ground for inquiring whether there is any other admissible rendering which will better harmonize with other unambiguous passages. If the laws of the language admit another rendering, we are compelled to seek it; and if New Testament usage furnish any other in similar connections, we are invited to adopt it.

Now it so happens that there are just three forms in which the agency of the Holy Spirit is expressed by the Greek word *Pneuma* in conjunction with a preposition. These three are *Dia* with the genitive, *Hupo* with the genitive, and *En* with the dative. Of these three, all of which are rendered by or through the Spirit, the last occurs most frequently; so that the very expression under discussion, which the writer so unhesitatingly renders “in one Spirit,” is the Greek form most frequently rendered *by the Spirit*, and used in declaring that something is done by the Spirit as an agent or actor. That it is correctly thus rendered, will be apparent upon examination of a few of these passages. We find no less than four occurrences of this usage in the very chapter which contains the text in dispute, and in the immediate context. We read in the third verse, “No man speaking *En Pneumati Theou*, by the Spirit of God, calls Jesus accursed; and no man is able to say that Jesus is the Lord, but *En Pneumati Hagio* by the Holy Spirit.” In neither of these cases can we render it in the Spirit, because it is evidently the purpose of the writer to express an agency of the Spirit; and because men can say that Jesus is Lord by the Spirit, though they be not themselves in the Spirit. It was by the Spirit as the source of all evidence, and not in the Spirit, that men were able to believe in and acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus; and when a man called Jesus accursed, it was proof not merely that he was not in the Spirit, but that he did not speak by the light which the Spirit afforded through his divine testimony.

Again, in the ninth verse we read, “To another is given faith *En To Auto Pneumati* by the same Spirit; to another the gift of healing *En To Auto Pneumati* by the same Spirit.” Now, the parties of whom these gifts were conferred were all in the Spirit; but these gifts were conferred by the Spirit, and this is what the apostle here affirms. In the ten verses of this chapter, from the third to the thirteenth, there are twelve things said to be done by the Spirit, and *En Pneumati* is the prevailing expression, only varied for the sake of euphony by *Dia Pneurnatos Kata Pneuma* once, and leaving *En Pneumati*, to be understood throughout the tenth verse.

As this criticism constitutes a capital point in this inquiry, I will be excused for accumulating evidence upon evidence in its favor. The two forms, *Hupo Pneumatos* and *en pnemati*, are used in the same sense by Matthew and Luke in describing the same event. Each says that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness” (Mat. 4:1, Lu. 4:1), Matthew using the former expression, and Luke the latter. Peter and Paul do the same thing. In declaring that the prophets of old spake “as they were moved by the Holy Spirit,” Peter uses *pneumatos* with the genitive; while Paul, in speaking of the mystery which was not made known to other generations, “as it was revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit,” uses *pneumati* with the dative. (Compare II Pet. 1:21 with Eph. 3:5.) In view of all this evidence, we hold it is undeniable that the expression *en pneumati* is frequently used by the apostles in expressing what is done by the Spirit, and that it may be rendered by the Spirit wherever it is more suitable either to the context, or to the nature of the subject under discussion in a particular passage.

I think it may now be affirmed that we have established three propositions: *First*, that to render the passage in question, “we were all immersed in one Spirit into one body,” would be a mis-location of the apostle’s words, and untrue in fact. *Second*, that it would be equally untrue to render it, “in one Spirit we were all immersed into one body”; meaning thereby, that we were first in the Spirit, and afterwards immersed into the body. *Third*, that the passage may be rendered, so far as grammatical propriety is concerned, “by one Spirit we were all immersed into one body.” This last rendering being entirely consistent with New Testament usage, and the only alternative if the first two are rejected, we shall be compelled to adopt it provided it yields a sense in harmony with the context and with other known facts upon the same subject.

**Vs. 14.** Please notice the reversal in the order of the figure. In Verse 12 the unity of the body even though many members— in Verse 14 the many members even though one body. In the first instance (Vs. 12) unity is emphasized; in the second instance (Vs. 14), the indispensable value of each member is the point.

**Vs. 15.** What a strange observation is created when we personify the members of the human body, and yet this is the force of the figure. Imagine the ridiculous circumstance of the foot complaining against the hand. This is unthinkable because we know of the separate value and importance of each member—so we should of each member of the body of Christ.

**Vs. 16.** The apostle is saying—each member is important— gifted or not gifted—each has a function important to the work of the body. How strange for the ear to claim it was of no value to the body because it was not the eye! And yet some ungifted— or less spectacularly gifted persons in Corinth, were acting in just such a manner.

**Vs. 17.** To show the place and import of each member, try to imagine a body made of only an eye—or an ear—how much would be lost to the human body if we lost one or more of our members—and so with the body of Christ. This is to balance the thinking of both the gifted and the non-gifted in the church. No one is indispensable—but neither is anyone unimportant.

**Vs. 18.** God’s decisions are not to be repented of. God’s purposes are always for man’s best interest and good. The human body was created by God and therefore owes its existence and expression to Him. Man was created for God’s glory and pleasure. How much stronger is the principle of the rights of ownership when applied to the body of Christ, His church? The church does not belong to itself (Eph. 5:25; I Cor. 6:19,20.). Therefore, each member should be eager and content to carry out the place and work God has given him to do.

**Vs. 19.** There simply could not be a body without a multiplicity of members. If there was dissatisfaction on the part of one, and God, to accommodate the desires of this one member, gave him the right or power to become another member, would not soon all members want to become the most prominent? Soon the power and effectiveness of the body would be lost—we might add, that if there was a dissolution of the body, there would likewise be a loss of every member.

**Vs. 20.** Once again the conclusion: “Paul’s theme is: The Body—not one member but many. We who constitute the church and are individually gifted by the Spirit, must ever keep this great fact in mind. A living illustration of it is ever before us in our own human body. This helps us to avoid all dissatisfaction with ourselves” (Lenski p. 525).

**Vs. 21.** To enlarge upon the figure with illustration and application is the purpose of the next few verses (21-27).

Some members of the Corinthian church could be involved in the imagined conversation of the members of the human body. The over-emphasis upon the particular function of one member of the body is here pointed up: To glory in the power of expression as if you were not dependent upon another is not true as well as being selfish. Imagine the eye saying to the hands—"I have no need of you." Of what value is the power of sight without some way of expressing or reacting to what is seen? The same point is made in reference to the head and feet.

**Vs. 22.** To stress the interdependence of the members Paul now reminds the Corinthians of a well-known point in the care and function of the body. Not all the members of the body are as strong or as attractive as others. But this does not reflect upon their importance—some of the very feeble or inconspicuous members of the body are as necessary as the stronger more attractive ones. And so it is with the inconspicuous "feeble" members of the Church.

**Vs. 23.** Some parts of the body we do not naturally wish to display—we feel ashamed at their exposure—upon such members we spend a good deal of time and thought to hide them and thus make them comely. Such members have a decency within themselves. The more abundant comeliness of our uncomely members is obtained by the demands of their nature.

**Vs. 24.** The more comely parts of the human body have no need of special care to grant them acceptance or honor. The point of the whole analogy is that God recognizes the need and purpose of each member of the human body—no one member is minimized by Him. God honors all the members of the human body in just the manner here described. The body of man is wonderfully fashioned to the advantage and honor of each member—and so has He created the body of His Son. We need to find our place and fill it—for there is no one else who can fill it for us. In this there is honor.

**Vs. 25.** Such a thoughtful, careful formation of both the human body and His spiritual body is for the grand purpose of maintaining the unity of the body. Each member in the church should be reminded—yea, urged to recognize that the hurt of one is the hurt of all. The whole body is injured when one does not receive care. This care is given by God to each member of the human body—now the point is plain, let each member give the same type of care to each other—if we do not, the whole body will suffer.

**Vs. 26.** This verse has been anticipated in the mention of "schism" in the body in Vs. 25. How are some of the non-gifted members of the Corinthian Church feeling while some of the Spiritually gifted members look down upon them; or ignore them as though they were not needed, or indeed, as if they did not even exist? When one suffers, the whole body suffers. Men speak against the church when they speak against any member. The physical body cannot be injured in any portion of it without the whole body suffering. If the brain has accomplished, does not the whole body rejoice with its recognition? Let this same selfless concern and unity prevail in the body of Christ.

**Vs. 27.** We should indeed be ready for the conclusion—it has been made at least twice before—enlarged and illustrated—now in its full-orbed beauty and power we can appreciate it. "We are the body of Christ and severally members thereof," which means unity, co-operation, concern, honor, responsibility, holy privilege.

Gradation of gifts according to importance, 28-30. By ranking the spiritually gifted men in this order (please notice it), precedence of each is settled—i.e., the order of importance is given by listing the most important first and the least important last. What is last in this list? *The answer is "tongues."*

**Vs. 28.** We are now to consider some of the members. The order in which they are mentioned indicates their importance. God made the decision as to who would be honored. Please notice no one is left out. It might be significant that there are nine special gifts mentioned, and here we have nine expressions of service in the church.

The word "apostle" means "one sent"—in a special way the twelve and Paul were sent by Christ—

they were His ambassadors or personal representatives. Prophets were those persons with the gift of prophecy. Such persons were given such a gift by God through the hands of the apostles—at least the only examples of the means of making prophets so indicates (Cf. Acts 19:1-6). The teachers are mentioned as the shepherds or elders of the church in Eph. 4:11. There are the supernaturally endowed persons of whom we have already studied. These persons are those with the spiritual gifts of healing and miracles. However, God has provided areas of service for all in the church. There is much to be done and many helpers are needed to do the work. All can help in the very many ways open for service. The writer once prepared a talent sheet on which he listed 21 separate areas of service in which any and all Christians could “help.” Without such “help” we would have no need for teachers, apostles, prophets, or anyone else. There are those who display a real ability in the area of leadership and organization. There is surely a place for them in the church of the Lord. Last of all, and perhaps least of all, are those with the gift of tongues. There is a place for such persons—such a place and work is to be considered at length in Chapter Fourteen.

**Vs. 29 & 30.** The obvious answer to all the questions of Vs. 29 & 30 is “No, they are not.” The point of this verse should now be clear—each person has a place and service—no need for more apostles than those chosen by God—no need for more prophets. And so, we might add, there is no need for more in any area than God chose.

**Vs. 31.** This verse has a twofold possibility of interpretation:

(1) Desire the greater or more spiritually profitable gift—i.e., if you are only a helper you could desire or want the gift of knowledge-prophecy—wisdom—or even tongues. When one of the apostles visited the church, or you visited one of the apostles, perhaps the Holy Spirit would see fit to impart to you such power or such a gift through the laying on of the hands of the apostles.

(2) It could refer to greater gifts attendant with the obtaining of real love. Paul could be saying, “I will show you how to find the gifts or qualities of character you could never obtain except through love.” Love provides powers and abilities far superior to any of those we have mentioned, We prefer this second interpretation.

## SUPERIORITY OF LOVE IN COMPARISON WITH ALL SPIRITUAL GIFTS 13:1-13

*a. The essential of love, 1-3*

### **Text 13:1-3**

- 1) If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, 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 have not love, I am nothing.
- 3) And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.

### **Thought Questions 13:1-3**

42. Can we substitute the word “language” in Vs. 1 for the word “tongues”?
43. Are the “men” of Vs. 1 men of various nations? Do angels speak? In what language? What would be superior about the language of angels?
44. How do we know we have love in our speech? Please attempt an answer.
45. Why would man without love be like a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal? What is wrong with the brass and the cymbal?
46. What is emphasized in Vs. 2 that is not found in Vs. 1?
47. What is the use made of the word “prophecy” in Vs. 2?
48. Is there some distinction in the use of knowledge and mysteries?

49. What special kind of “faith” does Paul have in mind in Vs. 2?
50. How would love be expressed in the use of faith?
51. Would verse three refer to the “helps” of 12:28?
52. How could a person give to the poor and yet have not love?
53. What possible motive would a man have (apart from love) for giving his body to be burned?

### **Paraphrase 13:1-3**

1. Namely, by acquiring an eminent degree of love. For, with respect to those which ye esteem the best gifts, I declare, that though I could speak all the languages of men, and even of angels, but have not love to direct me in the use of them, I am no better than sounding brass, or a noisy cymbal.
2. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and know all the deep doctrines of the gospel, and possess a complete knowledge of the ancient revelations; and though I have all faith (chap. 12: 9. note 1.), so as to be able to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing in the sight either of God or of man.
3. And though I spend all my goods in feeding the poor, and though I deliver my body that I may be burned for my religion, but have not love as the principle from which I act, I am nothing profited by these things, as they are the actions of a vain hypocrite.

### **Comment 13:1-3**

We have been so greatly helped in reading Henry Drummond’s comments on these verses we reproduce them here for the help of all who read.

### **THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD**

Every one has asked himself the great question of antiquity as of the modern world: What is the *summum bonum*—the supreme good? You have life before you. Once only you can live it. What is the noblest object of desire, the supreme gift to covet?

We have been accustomed to be told that the greatest thing in the religious world is Faith. That great word has been the keynote for centuries of the popular religion; and we have easily learned to look upon it as the greatest thing in the world. Well, we are wrong. If we have been told that, we may miss the mark. I have taken you, in the chapter which I have just read, to Christianity at his source; and there we have seen, “The greatest of these is love.” It is not an oversight. Paul was speaking of faith just a moment before. He says, “If I have all faith, so that I can remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.” So far from forgetting he deliberately contrasts them, “Now abideth, Faith, Hope, Love,” and without a moment’s hesitation the decision falls, “The greatest of these is Love.”

And it is not prejudice. A man is apt to recommend to others his own strong point. Love was not Paul’s strong point. The observing student can detect a beautiful tenderness growing and ripening all through his character as Paul gets old; but the hand that wrote, “The greatest of these is love,” when we meet it first, is stained with blood.

Nor is this letter to the Corinthians peculiar in singling out love as the *summum bonum*. The masterpieces of Christianity are agreed about it. Peter says, “Above all things have fervent love among yourselves.” *Above all things*. And John goes farther, “God is love.” And you remember the profound remark which Paul makes elsewhere, “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” Did you ever think what he meant by that? In those days men were working the passage to Heaven by keeping the Ten Commandments, and the hundred and ten other commandments which they had manufactured out of them. Christ said, I will show you a more simple way. If you do one thing, you will do these hundred and ten things, without ever thinking about them. If you love, you will unconsciously fulfill the whole law. And you can readily see for yourselves how that must be so. Take any of the commandments. “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” If a man love God, you will not require to tell him that. Love is the fulfilling of that law. “Take not His name in vain.” Would he ever dream of taking His name in vain if he loved Him? “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” Would he not be too glad to have one day in seven to dedicate more exclusively to the object of his affection? Love would fulfill all these laws

regarding God. And so, if he loved Man, you would never think of telling him to honor his father and mother. He could not do anything else. It would be preposterous to tell him not to kill. You could only insult him if you suggested that he should not steal—how could he steal from those he loved? It would be superfluous to beg him not to bear false witness against his neighbor. If he loved him it would be the last thing he would do. And you would never dream of urging him not to covet what his neighbors had. He would rather they possessed it than himself. In this way “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” It is the rule for fulfilling all rules, the new commandment for keeping all the old commandments Christ’s one secret of the Christian life.



Now Paul has learned that; and in this noble eulogy he has given us the most wonderful and original account extant of the *summum bonum*. We may divide it into three parts. In the beginning of the short chapter, we have Love *contrasted*, in the heart of it, we have Love *analyzed*, toward the end, we have Love *defended* as the supreme gift.

### THE CONTRAST

Paul begins by contrasting Love with other things that men in those days thought much of. I shall not attempt to go over these things in detail. Their inferiority is already obvious.

He contrasts it with eloquence. And what a noble gift it is, the power of playing upon the souls and wills of men, and rousing them to lofty purposes and holy deeds. Paul says, "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." And we all know why. We have all felt the brazenness of words without emotion, the hollowness, the unaccountable unpersuasiveness, of eloquence behind which lies no Love.

He contrasts it with prophecy. He contrasts it with mysteries. He contrasts it with faith. He contrasts it with charity. Why is Love greater than faith? Because the end is greater than the means. And why is it greater than charity? Because the whole is greater than the part. Love is greater than faith, because the end is greater than the means. What is the use of having faith? It is to connect the soul with God. And what is the object of connecting man with God? That he may become like God. But God is Love. Hence Faith, the means, is in order to Love, the end. Love, therefore, obviously is greater than faith. It is greater than charity, again, because the whole is greater than a part. Charity is only a little bit of Love, one of the innumerable avenues of Love, and there may even be, and there is, a great deal of charity without Love. It is a very easy thing to toss a copper to a beggar on the street; it is generally an easier thing than not to do it. Yet Love is just as often in the withholding. We purchase relief from the sympathetic feelings roused by the spectacle of misery, at the copper's cost. It is too cheap—too cheap for us, and often too dear for the beggar. If we really loved him we would either do more for him, or less.

Then Paul contrasts it with sacrifice and martyrdom. And I beg the little band of would-be missionaries — and I have the honor to call some of you by this name for the first time—to remember that though you give your bodies to be burned, and have not Love, it profits nothing — nothing! You can take nothing greater to the heathen world than the impress and reflection of the Love of God upon your own character. That is the universal language. It will take you years to speak in Chinese, or in the dialects of India. From the day you land, that language of Love, understood by all, will be pouring forth its unconscious eloquence. It is the man who is the missionary, it is not his words. His character is his message. In the heart of Africa, among the great Lakes, I have come across black men and women who remembered the only white man they ever saw before—David Livingstone; and as you cross his footsteps in that dark continent, men's faces light up as they speak of the kind doctor who passed there years ago. They could not understand him; but they felt the love that beat in his heart. Take into your new sphere of labor, where you also mean to lay down your life, that simple charm, and your lifework must succeed. You can take nothing greater, you need take nothing less. It is not worth while going if you take anything less. You may take every accomplishment; you may be braced for every sacrifice; but if you give your body to be burned, and have not Love, it will profit you and the cause of Christ *nothing*.

*b. The conduct of love 13:4-7.*

#### Text 13:4-7

4) Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

- 5) doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil;
- 6) rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth;
- 7) beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

#### **Thought Questions 13:4-7**

54. There are many who suffer for a long time—what added element does love give?
55. What are the evidences of envy? i.e., how can we tell when one is envious?
56. Why would love prevent pride?
57. Why do certain persons become “puffed up”?
58. Please specify some type of unseemly behavior.
59. Love causes us not to seek our own—and yet Paul said “if any man provide not for his own he is worse than an unbeliever.” Please explain.
60. Is it true that if we have love we will not be provoked? Explain.
61. Explain the expression “taketh not account of evil.” Does this relate to holding grudges or ill will?
62. Why would anyone want to rejoice in unrighteousness? Is this written to Christian people?
63. What will cause us to rejoice in the truth? Why?
64. Love “covereth all things.” (See Footnote.) Explain this.
65. Does love make us gullible that we would “believe all things”? Explain.
66. What were some of the hopeless situations in the lives of certain men in which love helped them to “hope all things”? Love for whom or what?
67. Is it really true that love will enable us to endure *all* things?

#### **Paraphrase 13:4-7**

4. The excellence of love appears in its operations: Love disposeth one to bear injuries long, and to be kind to those who injure him. Love preserves one from envying those who are greater, or richer, or better than himself. Love keeps one from vaunting of his attainments. Love keeps one from being puffed up with pride and anger.
5. Love doth not suffer one to behave haughtily, nor to seek his own interest only: one animated by love is not exasperated on every little provocation; and doth not put a bad construction on the character and actions of others:
6. Doth not take pleasure in iniquity committed by others, though he should reap advantage from it; but jointly rejoiceth with good men in every virtuous action.
7. He covereth all the failings of others; and being free from evil himself, believeth all things, and hopeth all things that are good of others, and patiently beareth all afflictions.

#### **Comment 13:4-7**

Once again from Henry Drummond:

#### **THE ANALYSIS**

After contrasting Love with these things, Paul, in three verses, very short, gives us an amazing analysis of what this supreme thing is. I ask you to look at it. It is a compound thing, he tells us. It is like light. As you have seen a man of science take a beam of light and pass it through a crystal prism, as you have seen it come out on the other side of the prism broken up into its component colors—red, and blue, and yellow, and violet, and orange, and all the colors of the rainbow—so Paul passes this thing, Love, through the magnificent prism of his inspired intellect, and it comes out on the other side broken up into its elements. And in these few words we have what one might call the Spectrum of Love, the analysis of Love. Will you observe what its elements are? Will you notice that they have common names; that they are virtues which we hear about every day; that they are things which can be practiced by every man in every place in life; and how, by a multitude of small things and ordinary virtues, the supreme thing, the *summum bonum*, is made up?

The Spectrum of Love has nine ingredients:

Patience	“Love suffereth long.”
Kindness	“And is kind.”
Generosity	“Love envieth not.”
Humility	“Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.
Courtesy	“Doth not behave itself unseemly.”
Unselfishness	“Seeketh not her own.
Good Temper	“Is not easily provoked.”
Guilelessness	“Thinketh no evil.’
Sincerity	“Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.”

Patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, guilelessness, sincerity—these make up the supreme gift, the stature of the perfect man. You will observe that all are in relation to men, in relation to life, in relation to the known today and the near tomorrow, and not to the unknown eternity. We hear much of love to God; Christ spoke much of love to man. We make a great deal of peace with heaven; Christ made much of peace on earth. Religion is not a strange or added thing, but the inspiration of the secular life, the breathing of an eternal spirit through this temporal world. The supreme thing, in short, is not a thing at all, but the giving of a further finish to the multitudinous words and acts which make up the sum of every common day.

There is no time to do more than make a passing note upon each of these ingredients. Love is *Patience*. This is the normal attitude of Love; Love passive, Love waiting to begin; not in a hurry; calm; ready to do its work when the summons comes, but meantime wearing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Love suffers long; beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things. For Love understands, and therefore waits.

*Kindness*. Love active. Have you ever noticed how much of Christ’s life was spent in doing kind things—in *merely* doing kind things? Run over it with that in view, and you will find that He spent a great proportion of His time simply in making people happy, in doing good turns to people. There is only one thing greater than happiness in the world, and that is holiness; and it is not in our keeping; but what God *has* put in our power is the happiness of those about us, and that is largely to be secured by our being kind to them.

“The greatest thing,” says someone, “a man can do for his Heavenly Father is to be kind to some of His other children.” I wonder why it is that we are not all kinder than we are? How much the world needs it. How easily it is done. How instantaneously it acts. How infallibly it is remembered. How superabundantly it pays itself back—for there is no debtor in the world so honorable, so superbly honorably, as Love. “Love never faileth.” Love is success, Love is happiness, Love is life. “Love I say,” with Browning, “is energy of Life.”

“For life, with all it yields of joy or woe  
 And hope and fear,  
 Is just our chance o’ the prize of learning love,—  
 How love might be, hath been indeed, and is.”

Where Love is, God is. He that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God. God is Love. Therefore *love*. Without distinction, without calculation, without procrastination, love. Lavish it upon the poor, where it is very easy; especially upon the rich, who often need it most; most of all upon our equals, where it is very difficult, and for whom perhaps we each do least of all. There is a difference between *trying to please* and *giving pleasure*. Give pleasure. Lose no chance of giving pleasure. For that is the ceaseless and anonymous triumph of a truly loving spirit. “I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.”

*Generosity.* “Love envieth not.” This is love in competition with others. Whenever you attempt a good work you will find other men doing the same kind of work, and probably doing it better. Envy them not. Envy is a feeling of ill-will to those who are in the same line as ourselves, a spirit of covetousness and detraction. How little Christian work even is a protection against un-Christian feeling. That most despicable of all the unworthy moods which cloud a Christian’s soul assuredly waits for us on the threshold of every work, unless we are fortified with this grace of magnanimity. Only one thing truly need the Christian envy—the large, rich, generous soul which “envieth not.”

And then, after having learned all that, you have to learn this further thing, *Humility*—to put a seal upon your lips and forget what you have done. After you have been kind, after Love has stolen forth into the world and done its beautiful work, go back into the shade again and say nothing about it. Love hides even from itself. Love waives even self-satisfaction. “Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.”

The fifth ingredient is a somewhat strange one to find in this *summum bonum*: *Courtesy*. This is Love in society, Love in relation to etiquette. “Love does not behave itself unseemly.” Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. And the one secret of politeness is to love. Love *cannot* behave itself unseemly. You can put the most untutored persons into the highest society, and if they have a reservoir of Love in their heart they will not behave themselves unseemly. They simply cannot do it. Carlisle said of Robert Burns that there was no truer gentleman in Europe than the ploughman-poet. It was because he loved everything—the mouse, and the daisy, and all the things, great and small, that God had made. So with this simple passport he could mingle with any society, and enter courts and palaces from his little cottage on the banks of the Ayr. You know the meaning of the word “gentleman.” It means a gentle man—a man who does things gently with love. And that is the whole art and mystery of it. The gentle man cannot in the nature of things do an ungentle, an ungentlemanly thing. The ungentle soul, the inconsiderate, unsympathetic nature, cannot do anything else. “Love doth not behave itself unseemly.”

*Unselfishness.* “Love seeketh not her own.” Observe: Seeketh not even that which is her own. In Britain the Englishman is devoted, and rightly, to his rights. But there come times when a man may exercise even the higher right of giving up his rights. Yet Paul does not summon us to give up our rights. Love strikes much deeper. It would have us not seek them at all, ignore them, eliminate the personal element altogether from our calculations. It is not hard to give up our rights. They are often eternal. The difficult thing is to give up ourselves. The more difficult thing still is not to seek things for ourselves at all. After we have sought them, bought them, won them, deserved them, we have taken the cream off them for ourselves already. Little cross then to give them up. But not to seek them, to look every man not on his own things, but on the things of others—*id opus est*. “Seekest thou great things for thyself,” said the prophet; “*seek them not.*” Why? Because there is no greatness in things. *Things* cannot be great. The only greatness is unselfish love. Even self-denial in itself is nothing, is almost a mistake. Only a great purpose or a mightier love can justify the waste. It is more difficult, I have said, not to seek our own at all, than, having sought it, to give it up. I must take that back. It is only true of a partly selfish heart. Nothing is a hardship to Love, and nothing is hard. I believe that Christ’s “yoke” is easy. Christ’s yoke is just His way of taking life. And I believe it is an easier way than any other. I believe it is a happier way than any other. The most obvious lesson in Christ’s teaching is that there is no happiness in having and getting anything, but only in giving. I repeat, *there is no happiness in having or in getting, but only in giving.* And half the world is on the wrong scent in pursuit of happiness. They think it consists in having and getting, and in being served by others. It consists in giving, and in serving others. He that would be great among you, said Christ, let him serve. He that would be happy, let him remember that there is but one way—it is more blessed, it is more happy, to give than to receive.

The next ingredient is a very remarkable one: *Good Temper*. “Love is not easily provoked.” Nothing could be more striking than to find this here. We are inclined to look upon bad temper as a very harmless weakness. We speak of it as a mere infirmity of nature, a family failing, a matter of temperament, not a thing to take into very serious account in estimating a man’s character. And yet here, right in the heart of this analysis of love, it finds a place; and the Bible again and again returns to condemn it as one of the most destructive elements in human nature.

The peculiarity of ill temper is that it is the vice of the virtuous. It is often the one blot on an otherwise noble character. You know men who are all but perfect, and women who would be entirely perfect, but for an easily ruffled, quick-tempered, or “touchy” disposition. This compatibility of ill temper with high moral character is one of the strangest and saddest problems of ethics. The truth is there are two great classes of sins—sins of the *Body*, and sins of the *Disposition*. The Prodigal Son may be taken as a type of the first, the Elder Brother of the second. Now, society has no doubt whatever as to which of these is the worse. Its brand falls, without a challenge, upon the Prodigal. But are we right? We have no balance to weigh one another’s sins, and coarser and finer are but human words; but faults in the higher nature may be less venial than those in the lower, and to the eye of Him who is Love, a sin against Love may seem a hundred times more base. No form of vice, not worldliness, not greed of gold, not drunkenness itself, does more to un-Christianize society than evil temper. For embittering life, for breaking up communities, for destroying the most sacred relationships, for devastating homes, for withering up men and women, for taking the bloom of childhood, in short, for sheer gratuitous misery-producing power, this influence stands alone. Look at the Elder Brother, moral, hard-working, patient, dutiful—let him get all credit for his virtues—look at this man, this baby, sulking outside his own father’s door. “He was angry,” we read, “and would not go in.” Look at the effect upon the father, upon the servants, upon the happiness of the guests. Judge of the effect upon the Prodigal—and how many prodigals are kept out of the Kingdom of God by the unlovely character of those who profess to be inside? Analyze, as a study in Temper, the thunder-cloud itself as it gathers upon the Elder Brother’s brow. What is it made of? Jealousy, anger, pride, uncharity, cruelty, self-righteousness, touchiness, doggedness, sullenness—these are the ingredients of this dark and loveless soul. In varying proportions, also, these are the ingredients of all ill temper. Judge if such sins of the disposition are not worse to live in, and for others to live with, than sins of the body. Did Christ indeed not answer the question Himself when He said, “I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of Heaven before you.” There is really no place in Heaven for a disposition like this. A man with such a mood could only make Heaven miserable for all the people in it. Except, therefore, such a man be born again, he cannot, he simply *cannot*, enter the Kingdom of Heaven. For it is perfectly certain—and you will not misunderstand me—that to enter Heaven a man must take it with him.

You will see then why Temper is significant. It is not in what it is alone, but in what it reveals. This is why I take the liberty now of speaking of it with such unusual plainness. It is a test for love, a symptom, a revelation of an unloving nature at bottom. It is the intermittent fever which bespeaks unintermittent disease within; the occasional bubble escaping to the surface which betrays some rotteness underneath; a sample of the most hidden products of the soul dropped involuntarily when off one’s guard; in a word, the lightning form of a hundred hideous and un-Christian sins. For a want of patience, a want of kindness, a want of generosity, a want of courtesy, a want of unselfishness, are all instantaneously symbolized in one flash of Temper.

Hence it is not enough to deal with the Temper. We must go to the source, and change the inmost nature, and the angry humors will die away of themselves. Souls are made sweet not by taking the acid fluids out, but by putting something in—a great Love, a new Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. Christ, the Spirit of Christ, interpenetrating ours, sweetens, purifies, transforms all. This only can eradicate what is wrong, work a chemical change, renovate and regenerate, and rehabilitate the inner man. Willpower does not change men. Time does not change men. Christ does. Therefore, “Let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” Some of us have not much time to lose. Remember, once more, that this is a matter of life or death. I cannot help speaking urgently, for myself, for yourselves. “Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” That is to say, it is the deliberate verdict of the Lord Jesus that it is better not to live than not to love. *It is better not to live than not to love.*

*Guilelessness* and *Sincerity* may be dismissed almost without a word. Guilelessness is the grace for suspicious people. And the possession of it is the great secret of personal influence. You will find, if you think for a moment, that the people who influence you are people who believe in you. In an atmosphere of suspicion men shrivel up; but in that atmosphere they expand, and find encouragement and educative fellowship. It is a wonderful thing that here and there in this hard, uncharitable world there should still be

left a few rare souls who think no evil. This is the great unworldliness. Love “thinketh no evil,” imputes no motive, sees the bright side, puts the best construction on every action. What a delightful state of mind to live in! What a stimulus and benediction even to meet with it for a day! To be trusted is to be saved. And if we try to influence or elevate others, we shall soon see that success is in proportion to their belief of our belief in them. For the respect of another is the first restoration of the self-respect a man has lost; our ideal of what he is becomes to him the hope and pattern of what he may become.

“Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.” I have called this *Sincerity* from the words rendered in the Authorized Version by “rejoiceth in the truth.” And, certainly, were this the real translation, nothing could be more just. For he who loves will love Truth not less than men. He will rejoice in the Truth—rejoice not in what he has been taught to believe; not in this Church’s doctrine or in that; not in this ism or in that ism; but “in *the Truth*.” He will accept only what is real; he will strive to get at facts; he will search for *Truth* with a humble and unbiased mind, and cherish whatever he finds at any sacrifice. But the more literal translation of the Revised Version calls for just such a sacrifice for truth’s sake here. For what Paul really meant is, as we there read, “Rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth,” a quality which probably no one English word—and certainly not *Sincerity*—adequately defines. It includes, perhaps more strictly, the self-restraint which refuses to make capital out of others’ faults; the charity which delights not in exposing the weakness of others, but “covereth all things”; the sincerity of purpose which endeavors to see things as they are, and rejoices to find them better than suspicion feared or calumny denounced.

So much for the analysis of Love. Now the business of our lives is to have these things fitted into our characters. That is the supreme work to which we need to address ourselves in this world, to learn Love. Is life not full of opportunities for learning Love? Every man and woman every day has a thousand of them. The world is not a playground; it is a schoolroom. Life is not a holiday, but an education. And the one eternal lesson for us all is *how better we can love*. What makes a man a good cricketer? Practice. What makes a man a good artist, a good sculptor, a good musician? Practice. What makes a man a good linguist, a good stenographer? Practice. What makes a man a good man? Practice. Nothing else. There is nothing capricious about religion. We do not get the soul in different ways, under different laws, from those in which we get the body and the mind. If a man does not exercise his arm he develops no biceps muscle; and if a man does not exercise his soul, he requires no muscle in his soul, no strength of character, no vigor of moral fibre, nor beauty of spiritual growth. Love is not a thing of enthusiastic emotion. It is a rich, strong, manly, vigorous expression of the whole round Christian character—the Christ-like nature in its fullest development. And the constituents of this great character are only to be built up by ceaseless practice.

What was Christ doing in the carpenter’s shop? Practicing. Though perfect, we read that He *learned* obedience, and grew in wisdom and in favor with God. Do not quarrel, therefore, with your lot in life. Do not complain of its never-ceasing cares, its petty environment, the vexations you have to stand, the small and sordid souls you have to live and work with. Above all, do not resent temptation; do not be perplexed because it seems to thicken round you more and more, and ceases neither for effort nor for agony nor prayer. That is your practice. That is the practice which God appoints you; and it is having its work in making you patient, and humble, and generous, and unselfish, and kind, and courteous. Do not grudge the hand that is moulding the still too shapeless image within you. It is growing more beautiful, though you see it not, and every touch of temptation may add to its perfection. Therefore keep in the midst of life. Do not isolate yourself. Be among men, and among things, and among troubles, and difficulties, and obstacles. You remember Goethe’s words: *Es bildet em Talent sich in der Stille. Doch em Charakter in denz Strom der Welt*. “Talent develops itself in solitude; character in the stream of life.” Talent develops itself in solitude—the talent of prayer, of faith, of meditation, of seeing the unseen; character grows in the stream of the world’s life. That, chiefly, is where men are to learn love.

How? Now, how? To make it easier, I have named a few of the elements of love. But these are only elements. Love itself can never be defined. Light is a something more than the sum of its ingredients—a glowing, dazzling, tremulous ether. And love is something more than all its elements—a palpitating, quivering, sensitive, living thing. By synthesis of all the colors, men can make whiteness, they cannot make light. By synthesis of all the virtues, men can make virtue, they cannot make love. How, then, are we to have this transcendent living whole conveyed into our souls? We brace our wills to secure it. We try to copy those who have it. We lay down rules about it. We watch. We pray. But these things alone will not bring love into our nature. Love is an *effect*. And only as we fulfill the right condition can we have the effect produced. Shall I tell you what the *cause* is?

If you turn to the Revised Version of the First Epistle of John you will find these words: "We love because He first loved us." "We love," not "We love *Him*." That is the way the old version has it, and it is quite wrong. "We love—because He first loved us." Look at that word "because." It is the *cause* of which I have spoken. "*Because* He first loved us," the effect follows that we love, we love Him, we love all men. We cannot help it. Because He loved us, we love, we love everybody. Our heart is slowly changed. Contemplate the love of Christ, and you will love. Stand before that mirror, reflect Christ's character, and you will be changed into the same image from tenderness to tenderness.

There is no other way. You cannot love to order. You can only look at the lovely object, and fall in love with it, and grow into likeness to it. And so look at this Perfect Character, this Perfect Life. Look at the great Sacrifice as He laid down Himself, all through life, and upon the Cross of Calvary; and you must love Him. And loving Him, you must become like Him. Love begets love. It is a process of induction. Put a piece of iron in the presence of an electrified body, and that piece of iron for a time becomes electrified. It is changed into a temporary magnet in the mere presence of a permanent magnet, and as long as you leave the two side by side, they are both magnets alike. Remain side by side with Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, and you too will become a permanent magnet, a permanently attractive force; and like Him you will draw all men unto you, like Him you will be drawn unto all men. That is the inevitable effect of Love. Any man who fulfills that cause must have that effect produced in him. Try to give up the idea that religion comes to us by chance, or by mystery, or by caprice. It comes to us by natural law, or by supernatural law, for all law is Divine. Edward Irving went to see a dying boy once, and when he entered the room he just put his hand on the sufferer's head, and said, "My boy, God loves you," and went away. And the boy started from his bed, and called out to the people in the house, "God loves me! God loves me!" It changed that boy. The sense that God loved him overpowered him, melted him down, and began the creating of a new heart in him. And that is how the love of God melts down the unlovely heart in man, and begets in him the new creature, who is patient and humble and gentle and unselfish. And there is no other way to get it. There is no mystery about it. We love others, we love everybody, we love our enemies, because He first loved us.

*c. The final values of love 13:8-13*

**Text 13:8-13**

- 8) Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away.
- 9) For we know in part, and we prophesy in part;
- 10) but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.
- 11) When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things.
- 12) For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known.
- 13) But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three: and the greatest of these is love.

**Thought Questions 13:8-13**

68. Verse 8a is a conclusion to all that has been said on the subject of love-indicate in what particulars that love never faileth.
69. Prophecies are to be done away. Why? When?
70. We know that languages have not passed away (there are yet hundreds of different languages today). Language will be used in heaven—just when will tongues cease?
71. When would there ever be a time when we would cease to learn and hence cause knowledge to be done away?



72. What is “that which is perfect”?
73. In what sense is prophecy and knowledge “in part”?
74. Where was Paul “a child” as in Vs. 11?
75. How is the analogy of a child used in this section? Is this a comparison of a child and the church? Explain.
76. When shall we know fully even as we are fully known? Please answer this in context.
77. In what sense is love the greatest?

### **Paraphrase 13:8-13**

8. Love always remaineth; nay, flourisheth most in the future life. But whether there be teachings by inspiration, they shall be abolished in the church; or foreign languages, they shall cease after the gospel has been preached to all nations; or the inspired knowledge of the ancient revelations, it shall be abolished when the church has attained its mature state.

9. Besides, we inspired teachers know the mysteries of the gospel only in part. For in the present life, we are not capable to know them fully, far less to make you understand them fully.

10. But when the perfect gift of complete illumination is bestowed on all in heaven, then that which is partial, namely, the present gifts of knowledge and prophecy, shall be abolished, as useless.

11. The difference between our present and future conceptions of spiritual things, may be illustrated by the knowledge of a child, compared to that of a man. When I was a child, my speech, my conceptions, and my reasonings, were erroneous. But when I became a man, I laid aside the conceptions, reasonings, and language of a child.

12. For now the revelations of God being made in human language, which cannot convey a just idea of spiritual things, we see them as through glass obscurely; but in the life to come we shall see them face to face, clearly. Now my knowledge of spiritual things is partial; but in the life to come I shall fully know them, even as I am fully known of superior beings.

13. Love is more excellent also than all the graces. For now abideth Faith, Hope, Love, these three being necessary to our present state; but the greatest of these is love: Because, after Faith and Hope are at an end, Love will subsist for ever in heaven.

### **Comment 13:8-13**

Some of our readers will no doubt wonder at the extended quotations found in these pages—the author is a teacher and has been one for two decades—he feels whenever he can cause the student to learn he has fulfilled his purpose. If this can be done by his own expression he will be more than ready to lay out whatever effort is necessary to be able to express the thought adequately—if, however, he feels others have done a better job than he could do and on the same subject he can see no reason to rehash what has already been said. This is the situation on the verses under present consideration. We quote from J. W. McGarvey, pp. 131-133.

[The superlative excellence of love is here shown in that it survives all things with which it may be compared, and reveals its close relation to God whose name is love (I John 3:8), by its eternal, imperishable nature. Prophecies, tongues and knowledge—three supernatural gifts though they were—were mortals compared with the divine spirit of love. They were needful in developing the infant church, but as that institution passed onward toward maturity and perfection (Heb. 5: 12-14; 6-1; Eph. 3:14-21; 4:11-16), they were outgrown and discontinued, because from them had been developed the clear, steady light of the recorded Word, and the mature thoughtfulness and assurance of a well-instructed church. They were thrown aside, therefore, as the wheat stalk which has matured its grain; or, to use Paul’s own figure, put away as the speech, feeling and judgment of childhood when they have produced their corresponding faculties in manhood. Though the triplet of child-faculties—speech, feeling, thought, do not form a

close parallel with the triplet of gifts—tongues, prophecies, knowledge, yet they were alike in that to both, the child and the church, they seemed severally all-important. All Christians who mistakenly yearn for a renewal of these spiritual gifts, should note the clear import of these words of the apostle, which show that their presence in the church would be an evidence of immaturity and weakness, rather than of fully developed power and seasoned strength. But if the *gifts* have passed from the church as transient and ephemeral, shall not that which they have produced abide? Assuredly they shall, until that which is perfect is come; i.e., until the coming of Christ. Then prophecy shall be merged into fulfillment, and the dim light of revelation shall be broadened into the perfect day. We today see the reflection of truth, rather than the truth itself. It has come to us through the medium of minds which, though divinely illuminated, were yet finite, and it has modified itself, though essentially spiritual, so as to be clothed in earthly words; and it is grasped and comprehended by us through the use of our material brains. Thus, though perfect after its kind, and true as far as it goes, our present knowledge of heavenly things is perhaps as far from the full reality as is the child's conception of earthly things (John 3:12). And so our present knowledge may well merge, as will prophecy, into a higher order of perfection, wherein both the means of manifestation (II Cor. 5:7) and of comprehension (I John 3:2) will be wholly perfect. So, though at present we may indeed know God, yet our knowledge is more that received by description, than that which is received by direct, clear sight, and personal acquaintance; but hereafter we shall know God in some sense as he knows us, and know the beings of the heavenly land as thoroughly as they now know us. Mirrors were then made of polished silver or brass, and were far more indistinct than our present glasses; so that to see a reflection in one of them was far less satisfactory than to see the reality.] 13 *But now* [in this present state] *abideth faith, hope, love, these three, and the greatest of these is love.* [If we give the phrase "but now" its other sense, as though the apostle said "But to sum things up, to give the net results," then we have him saying that faith, hope and love are eternal. While it is true that faith in the sense of trust and confidence, and hope in the sense of unclouded expectation, shall abide in heaven, yet, in their large, general meaning, faith shall be lost in sight, and hope in fruition (Rom. 8:24,25). It therefore seems more consistent to understand the apostle as asserting that the three graces shall abide while the earth stands; in contrast with miraculous gifts, which, according to his own prophetic statement, have ceased. He does not explain the superior excellence of love when compared with faith and hope, but the points of superiority are not hard to find.

## SHOULD I SPEAK IN TONGUES?

1. If all three are eternal, the other two shall be greatly diminished as graces by the Lord's coming, while love shall be infinitely enlarged.
2. Love is the basis of faith and hope, for we only fully believe in and hope for that which we love.
3. Faith and hope are human, but God himself is love.
4. Faith and hope can only properly work by love, and are worthless without it. But here the superiority is not so clear, for the three graces go hand in hand.

(We are indebted to D. Edmond Hiebert for the fine outline, from his book *An Introduction to the Pauline Epistles*, Moody Press, 1954.)

### **THE PROPER USE OF THE GIFTS 14:1-40**

1. The comparative value of tongues and prophecy, 1-25.
  - a. The comparison of their value in the Church, 1-19.
    - (1) The advice concerning spiritual gifts Vs. 1.

#### **Text 14:1**

Follow after love; yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

#### **Thought Questions 14:1**

78. How strong an expression is "follow after love"?

79. Who was to desire spiritual gifts?
80. What does desire have to do with obtaining spiritual gifts? How were they given?
81. The best gift was “prophesy”—explain why.

#### **Paraphrase 14:1**

Since it is a grace so excellent, pursue love by every method in your power; and only earnestly desire spiritual gifts, but especially that ye may prophesy.

#### **Comment 14:1**

**Vs. 1.** This is a transition from the subject of the importance of love to the proper use of Spiritual gifts.

Love will not be obtained without effort—we must pursue it to have it. Paul wants to assure the Corinthians that he is not minimizing the value of Spiritual gifts—they are important and desirable. A strong desire to have and to use properly each gift is a prerequisite to obtaining them. No suggestion is made in this verse as to how such gifts are given. Surely we cannot read into this verse prayer as a means of obtaining such gifts. This is simply an admonition to not treat lightly the obtaining and use of such gifts—if the Corinthians had been more earnest and sincere in obtaining them, they would have used them in a much more acceptable manner. The best gift is prophecy—if the reader will refer to the explanation and use of such a gift given earlier in this study he will know why such an admonition was true. The gift of prophecy included far more than just the ability to foretell future events—it included divine instruction—the prophet was a teacher. Teaching helps everyone—most especially when it proceeded from such a divine source.

2. The argument concerning tongues and prophecy, 2-6.
  - a. The contrasted nature of the two, 2-4.

#### **Text 14:2-4**

For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man understandeth; but in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men edification, and exhortation, and consolation. He that speaketh in a tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

#### **Thought Questions 14:2-4**

82. Why would anyone want to exercise the gift of tongues if it did not benefit man?
83. In what sense was the speaking in tongues “unto God”—i.e., is this suggesting the gift of tongues was used in personal worship?
84. Is it true that no man could understand the language spoken?
85. In what sense could not man understand?
86. Such utterances are only mysteries to some people—who?
87. Why call this gift the gift of prophecy if its use is almost solely for teaching?
88. Please define in your own words the three expressions: (1) edification, (2) exhortation, (3) consolation.
89. In what sense would the gift of tongues edify its possessor?
90. Are we to understand that a public meeting is in view in the use of the two gifts—tongues and prophecy?

#### **Paraphrase 14:2-4**

2. For he who speaketh in a foreign language in the public assemblies, speaketh not to men, but to God; for no one present understandeth him. Nevertheless, by the Spirit he speaketh mysteries, or things which, after he hath spoken them, are wholly hidden from the church.
3. But he who prophesieth, speaketh by inspiration to men in a known language, for increasing their faith, and stirring them up to their duty, and comforting them under their afflictions.

4. He therefore who speaketh in a foreign language, edifieth himself only; but he who prophesieth, speaketh in a known language, so as to edify the church.

**Comment 14:2-4**

**Vs. 2.** Here is the reason for the superiority of the gift of prophecy. We pre-suppose in the situation here described that no interpreter is present when the gift of tongues is exercised—this being the case, the use of such a gift is very limited in its benefit. The only one who understands the meaning of the words spoken is God. (Shall we exclude the speaker himself? The impression upon the assembled group would be that he was revealing a divine mystery—all of which was completely unintelligible to those listening.)

**Vs. 3.** In contrast—the prophet speaking in the language (or tongue) of the people present can greatly help them by information, admonition and promises from God. What the teacher or preacher of today does as he expounds and applies the word of God from the New Testament, the prophet of Paul’s day did by direct revelation.

**Vs. 4.** There seems to be some indication from the expression of this verse that the man with the gift of tongues did understand what he said, for Paul says he was built up in his faith by what he said by the tongue. Everyone is built up by the words of the prophet.

b. The argument from the contrast, 14:5,6.

**Text 14:5,6**

Now I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that ye should prophesy: and greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying. But now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching?

**Thought Questions 14:5,6**

91. In what sense are we to understand the desire of Paul that he would have all the Corinthians speak with tongues? All of them could not do so—what is meant?
92. Why mention the measure of greatness between the use of tongues and the use of prophecy? Did some of the Corinthians feel they were “great” because they had the gift of tongues?
93. Could all who spoke with tongues interpret what they said? Why not? Explain.
94. What is meant by speaking “by revelation”?
95. What is the “knowledge” of Vs. 6?
96. What distinction is here made between prophesying and teaching?

**Paraphrase 14:5,6**

I wish, indeed, that ye all spake foreign languages; but rather that ye were endowed with the gift of prophecy. For, a more useful inspired person is he who prophesieth (see vs. 3), than he who speaketh mysteries (vs. 2), in foreign languages, unless someone interpret what he speaketh, that the church may receive edification. For now, brethren, if I should come to you speaking the dictates of inspiration in foreign languages, what good shall I do you, unless I shall speak to you intelligibly, either by the revelation, peculiar to an apostle; or by the word of knowledge, the gift of a superior prophet; or by prophecy, the inspiration proper to an inferior prophet; or by doctrine, the inspiration proper to the ordinary pastor?

**Comment 14:5,6**

**Vs. 5.** Paul affirms that he would not object if the whole church had the gift of tongues (of course, this was not the condition, but it indicates the fact that if the Lord directed, the apostles might grant this power to any one of the members.) Therefore, those who had such gifts from the apostles should not think of themselves as especially deserving of such a gift. However, if all were to be endowed, Paul wanted it to be with the gift of prophecy. The apostle plainly affirms the superiority of the prophetic gift—such being

the case, God has actually honored the prophet above those with tongues. It would seem that some in the church with the gift of tongues were thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think. The ability to speak in a language one had never learned would indeed give some folk a sense of accomplishment which, coupled with pride, would cause them to feel highly honored of the Lord—such persons could have become very overbearing in their attitude of supposed superiority. To offset such an attitude, Paul stated the position of honor—it was not with those speaking in tongues.

Some had a double gift—to not only speak in a foreign language, but to also be able to interpret what had been said. Obviously, the gift of interpretation was not generally held or there would have been no problem.

**Vs. 6.** Paul was about to visit the Corinthians—he is now saying: “Suppose when I visit you I use only tongues in my conversation with you—of what profit would my visit be?” If, on the other hand, Paul exercised any one of the other four gifts here specified, he would greatly benefit the Corinthians—Revelation refers to the direct communication from God to man. “Knowledge” is supernatural knowledge, perhaps it refers to the understanding of the revelation. We have discussed the meaning of the gift of prophecy—the “teaching” given by Paul would be of the greatest help because it was infallible.

3. The teaching concerning tongues through illustrations, 14:7-13.
  - a. The illustrations from musical instruments, 7-9.
    - (1) The illustrations used, 7,8.

#### **Text 14:7,8**

Even things without life, giving a voice, whether pipe or harp, if they give not a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain voice, who shall prepare himself for war?

#### **Thought Questions 14:7,8**

97. Why begin a discussion of the proper use of a pipe or harp?
98. Why say “things without life”?
99. Meaning of “distinction in sounds.”
100. Is a discussion of identifying a tune on the pipe or the harp?
101. What is the point of the illustration of the proper use of the trumpet?

#### **Paraphrase 14:7,8**

For now, brethren, if I should come to you speaking the dictates of inspiration in foreign languages, what good shall I do you, unless I shall speak to you intelligibly, either by the revelation, peculiar to an apostle; or by the word of knowledge, the gift of a superior prophet; or by prophecy, the inspiration proper to an inferior prophet; or by doctrine, the inspiration proper to the ordinary pastor? In like manner, things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, unless they give a difference to the notes, both in tone and in time, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? Such unmeaning sounds are a fit image of unintelligible language, both in their nature and in their effect.

#### **Comment 14:7,8**

**Vs. 7.** Paul wants his readers to “see” the truth of his principle concerning the proper use of tongues. Here is an illustration to illumine the point. Think of the playing of a pipe or a harp, when do you enjoy listening to such an instrument? Isn’t it when you understand the tune being played? When the tune is not distinct, the instrument is just making noise.

**Vs. 8.** Yet another illustration has to do with the use of a war trumpet. This was much in use in Paul’s day. If the trumpeter did not know the “certain sound” for charge or retreat, it would in deed be tragic. Or, if knowing the call for charge or retreat, he did not blow it so as to be heard, it would have been just as bad.

b. The application made, vs. 9.

#### **Text 14:9**

So also ye, unless ye utter by the tongue speech easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye will be speaking into the air.

#### **Thought Questions 14:9**

102. In what sense “easy to be understood”?

103. Meaning of “speaking into the air.”

#### **Paraphrase 14:9**

So also ye, when ye speak by inspiration in your public assemblies, unless with the tongue ye utter intelligible speech, how shall it be known what is spoken? Therefore, however important the things ye speak may be, ye will be speaking into the air like madmen.

#### **Comment 14:9**

The application of the foregoing illustrations should be so obvious that there should be no question about it. Paul plainly says —if you use your tongue, use it like you would a pipe, a harp, or a trumpet— make your utterance intelligible. If you fail to do this you will not help anyone—you will be but speaking into the air.

c. The illustration from different voices, 14:10-13.

(1) The illustration used, 10,11.

#### **Text 14:10,11**

There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and no kind is without signification. If, then, I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh will be a barbarian unto me.

#### **Thought Questions 14:10,11**

104. How is the word “voices” used in this verse? Does this mean languages?

105. How are we to understand the word “signification”?

106. How is the word “barbarian” used in this connection?

#### **Paraphrase 14:10,11**

There are, no doubt, as many kinds of languages used in the world as ye speak, and none of them is without signification to those who are acquainted with them. Nevertheless, if I do not know the meaning of the language that is uttered, I shall be to the person who speaketh a foreigner, who has no knowledge of what he speaks, and he who speaketh shall be a foreigner to me: we shall be incapable of holding any conversation with each other.

#### **Comment 14:10,11**

**Vs. 10.** MacKnight indicates in his paraphrase the use of the word “voices” as it relates to the languages—it *can* be thus translated; however, we prefer to think of it as referring to voices as “sounds—i.e., the sound of the voice of an animal, or a bird, or even an insect. Surely there are a multiplicity of these “voices.” Each animal, each bird, has a purpose or significance in the use of the “voice” God has given him.



**Vs. 11.** The pointed application is “does your voice” —in this case, “gift of tongues”—have a purpose or significance? If I cannot understand a foreigner who is attempting to tell me something, I appear to him as a boorish person—an unlearned man. However, I might also look upon the speaker of this foreign language as the boor or barbarian because he cannot understand me any better than I him. There is no purpose or significance in such a situation.

d. The exhortation made, 14:12,13.

#### **Text 14:12,13**

So also ye, since ye are zealous of spiritual gifts (or Spirits), seek that ye may abound unto the edifying of the church. Wherefore let him that speaketh in a tongue pray that he may interpret.

#### **Thought Questions 14:12,13**

107. In what sense were the Corinthians zealous of Spiritual gifts?
108. What were the Corinthians to seek according to Paul’s instructions?
109. How could the church be edified?

#### **Paraphrase 14:12,13**

12. Wherefore ye also, that ye may not be barbarians to each other, since ye are earnestly desirous of spiritual gifts (see vs. 32), seek them, that by exercising them properly, ye may abound for the edification of the church.

13. For which cause, let him who by inspiration prayeth in the church in a foreign language, pray in such a manner, and at such a time, as someone who is inspired may interpret his prayer to the edification of the church.

#### **Comment 14:12,13**

**Vs. 12.** Paul says—if you want to be eager and zealous about something (and you surely do, as indicated in your use and abuse of tongues), let me select the subject and object of your zeal—the gift of prophesy and the consequent building up of all who hear. The whole church is helped in the proper use of these gifts—in the use made of them by the Corinthians a very few were helped—even this help was questionable, for they seemed to be puffed up about it.

**Vs. 13.** Here is a conclusion to the foregoing: Let the man who is supernaturally able to speak in a foreign language also have the ability to interpret such a language for the benefit of those who hear him.

The word “pray” in this verse, i.e., “pray that he may interpret,” is used in the same way as “desire” in earlier verses. It does not mean he shall obtain the gift of interpretation through answer to prayer, but that he is to have a strong desire for this gift. How shall he obtain it? The only means of impartation indicated in the Scripture is the laying on of the hands of the Apostles. Such a person with this strong desire could request that an apostle be provided to impart this gift to him.

MacKnight places an entirely different interpretation on Vs. 13, as can be observed by reading his paraphrase. He believes the prayer is made in a tongue (taking his thought from Vs. 14) and the interpretation is made by someone else present who has the gift of interpretation. In other words—if you are going to pray in a foreign language —do it in such a manner and at such a time that the man present with the gift of interpretation may hear you distinctly and may give the meaning of your prayer to the rest of the church.

In either understanding of the verse, the gift of interpretation is not obtained through a person's praying to God.

Granting, for sake of argument, that a person in Paul's day were to pray for the gift of the interpretation of the tongue he had just spoken—how would he conclude his prayer would be answered? The only way in which these gifts were given (according to the Divine record) was through the hands of the Apostles. Would he not then be praying for the coming of an apostle to him for the purpose of imparting such a gift?

4. The Apostle's use of tongues and prophecy, 14:14-19.
  - a. His determination to use both in worship, 14,15.

#### **Text 14:14,15**

For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the Spirit and I will sing with the understanding also.

#### **Thought Questions 14:14,15**

110. Does verse 14 teach that a man with the gift of tongues does not understand what he says? Explain.
111. How would it be possible to pray with both the Spirit and the understanding? Explain two ways.
112. Under what conditions was the praying and singing done?

#### **Paraphrase 14:14,15**

14. For if I pray publicly in a foreign language not interpreted, my spirit which understandeth that language prayeth, but my meaning in such a prayer is without fruit to the person for whom I pray.
15. What is then to be done, when the Spirit moves me to pray in the church in an unknown language? Why this, I will pray with the inspiration of the Spirit, but I will pray also with my meaning interpreted, vs. 13; I will sing with the inspiration of the Spirit, but I will sing also with my meaning interpreted.

#### **Comment 14:14,15**

**Vs. 14.** Even in private worship the advantage of understandable expression is evident. The Corinthians were evidently using tongues in prayer (both public and private). But if the one praying did not understand the words he used in prayer, of what value was the prayer to him? It is difficult to explain how this would take place. But, then, we cannot explain the presence of the power to speak in another language except on supernatural grounds.

**Vs. 15.** When praying (especially in public), the power of speaking in some foreign language could be exercised, but only when the gift of interpretation is present—either in the one who prays or in someone else present who hears the prayer. The same principle is to follow in singing—this is obviously some type of individual singing. Paul uses the first person to lend reality and authority to his words.

- b. His reminder that edification is the aim, 14:16,17.

#### **Text 14:16,17**

Else if thou bless with the Spirit, how shall he that filleth the place of the unlearned say the Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he knoweth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.

#### **Thought Questions 14:16,17**

113. What is meant here by blessing with the Spirit?

114. Who is the one in the place of the unlearned?  
 115. What is meant by saying the Amen?  
 116. What is the giving of thanks?  
 117. How could some not give thanks well? Does this relate to the possession of the gift of tongues?

#### **Paraphrase 14:16,17**

16. Else, when thou shalt bless God with an inspiration of the Spirit in an unknown language, he who in the congregation is a private or uninspired person, and heareth thee speak, how shall he assent to what thou speakest, and say the Amen to thy thanksgiving, since he knoweth not what thou sayest?
17. For thou indeed givest thanks in that unknown language in fit expressions, but the other who hears thee is not edified thereby.

#### **Comment 14:16,17**

**Vs. 16.** We have so far considered two areas where the gift of tongues was used: (1) in prayer, (2) in singing. We are now introduced to a third area: “giving of thanks.” This is referred to as “blessing with the Spirit” in Vs. 15a. This has to do with expressing in public the gratitude of the heart for the goodness of God—if such gratitude is expressed in a foreign tongue how shall the one who cannot understand the tongue be able to voice his approval or agreement? It would seem that one person gave expression to the praise and thanksgiving that filled all present— each listened and indicated to God and those present his approval by saying “Amen.” We understand the expression “he that filleth the place of the unlearned” to refer to anyone without the gift of the interpretation of tongues.

**Vs. 17.** The expression of gratitude might be very beautiful and meaningful, as indeed it would be since it was directed by the Holy Spirit, but of what value was it? Unless someone is strengthened in the faith, the purpose of such an expression has failed.

c. His preference for prophecy in the Church, 14:18,19.

#### **Text 14:18,19**

I thank God, I speak with tongues more than you all: how be it in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

#### **Thought Questions 14:18,19**

118. Why thank God that he could speak with tongues?  
 119. Why did Paul make such great use of tongues? For what purpose did he use them?  
 120. When are we in church?  
 121. How could we speak *without* our understanding?  
 122. Didn't Paul know what he spoke when he spoke with tongues?  
 123. Wouldn't the instruction given to Paul by God be just as inspired as the tongues? Why the great desire for tongues?

#### **Paraphrase 14:18,19**

18. I do not thus speak of foreign languages because I myself am deficient in them: for I worship my God, speaking in more foreign languages than all of you taken together.  
 19. Yet so far am I from being vain of this gift, that in the church I had rather speak five sentences with my meaning understood, that I may instruct others as well as myself, than ten thousand sentences in a foreign language, however sublime and elegant that discourse might be.

#### **Comment 14:18,19**

**Vs. 18.** Correction of an abuse does not minimize the importance of proper use. Paul wants the Corinthians to know that he approves of the proper use of tongues—he himself is an example. The

apostle was equipped with the ability to speak in foreign languages in a manner far superior to that of any or all of the Corinthians. This obviously refers to his use of such languages in his foreign evangelism. No Corinthian had spoken so often or so well in a foreign language as had Paul. We might add here that if someone today was thus endowed and used the power for the same purpose, we would have some of the same results as Paul.

**Vs. 19.** The church referred to here must be the assembled group in Corinth—or indeed in any place—why speak to such a group in a language they do not understand? Five words in a short sentence means more to them than ten thousand words— however eloquent in a foreign language.

d. The comparison of their value to non-believers, 14:20-25.

(1) The appeal for mental maturity, 14:20.

**Text 14:20**

Brethren, be not children in mind: yet in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men.

**Thought Questions 14:20**

124. Why introduce the thought of being children?
125. Explain how the Corinthians were using their minds like children.
126. How does the thought of malice fit the context?
127. Is Paul suggesting that in spite of the Spiritual gifts such persons were very immature? Why did God grant such gifts to such people?

**Paraphrase 14:20**

Brethren, do not, by exercising the gift of tongues with strife, shew yourselves children in understand; but in freedom from evil disposition be ye children, and in understanding be ye full grown men.

**Comment 14:20**

**Vs. 20.** There is a way in which one can be commended for being child-like—but not as it relates to the mind—a child likes the sensational, the exciting—so the Corinthians were like children in their preference for the use of tongues. It appealed to the love for the exciting—”If you wish to be like a child be like one in his total lack of ill will.” In heart, be like a child; in mind, be mature like a man.

(2) The sign-value of tongues and prophecy, 14:21,22.

**Text 14:21,22**

- 21 In the law it is written, by men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers will I speak unto this people; and not even thus will they hear me, saith the Lord.
- 22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving: but prophesying is for a sign, not to the unbelieving, but to them that believe.

**Thought Questions 14:21,22**

128. Please read Isa. 28:11,12 and tell why Paul refers to this prophecy as “law”.
129. Who were the men of strange tongues in the days of Isaiah? Who in Corinth?
130. Why didn’t they hear—i.e., in both cases? Why did God send men to His people?
131. Give the meaning of the word “sign” as here used.
132. Explain how tongues would be a sign to the unbelieving.
133. Explain how prophesying would be a sign for the believer.

**Paraphrase 14:21,22**

21. In the law it is foretold, Surely with other tongues, and with other lips, that is, by persons whose language is different from theirs, I will speak to this people: Yet not even so will they become obedient to me, saith the Lord.

22. Wherefore, foreign languages are for a sign of the effusion of the Holy Ghost on you, not to convince believers who do not understand these languages, but to convince unbelievers to whom ye speak in their own language, Acts II 8. But prophecy is for a sign of the effusion of the Spirit, not to convince unbelievers who cannot know, but to edify believers who know, that ye are inspired in prophesying.

#### **Comment 14:21,22**

**Vs. 21.** The “law” referred to here is found in the book of Isaiah. We should remember that all God says is important and to be considered as His will for man’s obedience. The men of strange tongues in the Isaiah reference were the Assyrians. God sent the Assyrians to “speak” to Judah—not so much by their language, for this was unintelligible to them, but by the sword. This, also, they failed to heed. The Jews of Corinth would recall the circumstances of the reference and see its application—foreign languages in the days of Isaiah were of little value—even when misused in Corinth, God’s displeasure is present.

**Vs. 22.** The use of tongues is a sign—they indicate or point to something. When an unbeliever is confronted with the miracle of someone speaking in his own native dialect who has never learned it, he is strongly inclined to heed what is said; thus the divine power of speaking in a foreign language becomes a great aid in evangelism. The use of tongues in a church service only serves to confuse when it is not understood by the listener.

The man who teaches and preaches through the gift of prophecy is the one who helps the believers. The communication of truth is the important action—either to foreign unbelievers in their language—or to believers in their native language.

(3) The effect of tongues and prophecy on non-believers, 14: 2 3-25.

(a) The effect of tongues, 14:23.

#### **Text 14:23**

If therefore the whole church be assembled together and all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned or unbelieving, will they not say that ye are mad?

#### **Thought Questions 14:23**

134. How could the whole church speak with tongues—were not some without this gift?

135. Just how would you classify the “unlearned and unbelieving” men?

136. Why would such men say the tongues speakers were mad?

#### **Paraphrase 14:23**

Well, then, if the whole church be assembled in one place, and the inspired persons all speak in foreign languages, and there come in persons ignorant of these languages, or heathens, will they not say that ye are mad, when they see the confusion ye make by speaking languages which no one present understands?

#### **Comment 14:23**

**Vs. 23.** Please remember the general heading of this section— i.e., the effect of tongues and prophecy on unbelievers. Here is one very unsavory effect—just suppose the whole church is assembled and all present are exercising the power of speaking in a foreign language (an admittedly exaggerated situation for such could not be the case)—one speaking in this language and another in that. Into such a meeting step several unbelievers— what will they think? Just what most unbelievers think at one of our present day tongues meetings—”they are mad.” Indeed they were and are. This presupposes a lack of the interpretation of such tongues—such must have been the case or Paul’s argument would not carry.

(b) The effect of prophecy, 14:24,25.

**Text 14:24,25**

But if all prophesy, and there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reprov'd by all, he is judged by all; the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed.

**Thought Questions 14:24,25**

137. How could any good effect come of all prophesying at the same time?
138. What is the meaning of the word “reprov'd” as here used?
139. In what sense is such a person “judged by all.”
140. Does this indicate anything about the content of preaching or teaching? If so, what?
141. What would cause the unbeliever to fall on his face?
142. What is the meaning of the word “worship”? Where is worship?
143. In what sense would God be among the prophesying church?

**Paraphrase 14:24,25**

24. But if all who are inspired prophesy, and there come in a heathen, or one ignorant of foreign languages, with an intention to act as a spy, such a person, understanding what is spoken, will be reprov'd for his idolatry, and other sins, by all who prophesy; and he will be questioned concerning his intention, by all who can discern spirits.

25. And thus the hidden purposes of his heart being made known, he will be astonished, and so, falling prostrate, he will worship God, and report that God is actually among you. Like Nebuchadnezzar he will say, “Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods—and a revealer of secrets” (Dan. II 47).

**Comment 14:24,25**

**Vs. 24.** We must assume that all prophesying would be done in order. All of the words of instruction, and correction would be perfectly clear to the unbeliever since it is in his own tongue. As the unbeliever listens, one after another speaks to his heart and conscience. His guilt before God is established time after time. He is weighed in God's balances and found wanting—not once, but many times by those who prophesy.

**Vs. 25.** The motives and intents of the unbelievers' heart are all open and evident through the words of the many prophets. Again and again he sees himself as God sees him—what is his response? He falls down (if not literally, at least in his heart) and does obeisance to God. To humble oneself by doing obeisance is the root meaning of the word “worship.” Finally, instead of the words of ridicule—‘ye are mad’—he will express words of holy reverence, “God is among or in you.”

2. The orderly employment of tongues and prophecy, 14:26-36.

a. The principle of orderliness in worship, 14:26.

**Text 14:26**

What is it then, brethren? When ye come together, each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

**Thought Questions 14:26**

144. Why introduce this section with the words “What is it then”?
145. Is the coming together the public meeting of the saints at Corinth?
146. What is meant by the expression “hath a psalm”?
147. What is “a revelation”?
148. Why not mention the gift of prophecy?
149. What is the point of this verse?

### **Paraphrase 14:26**

What then is to be done, brethren? When ye are assembled, one of you by inspiration bath a psalm; another bath a discourse; another bath something made known to him in a foreign language; another a revelation of some future event; another bath an interpretation of what was uttered in a foreign language. In such cases, let all these gifts be exercised to edification.

### **Comment 14:26**

**Vs. 26.** Paul is saying—here is the proper way to use these gifts in a public service (probably in contrast with the way they were using them). Let each one who possesses such a gift see that he uses it to build up the listeners. Perhaps the psalm, the teaching and the revelation are but expressions of the gift of prophecy. A psalm was a song—probably from the Book of Psalms, a teaching refers to some special instruction to be given from the word of God; revelation could refer to some direct word from God—the tongues are always to have an interpreter that those who hear might be edified.

b. The specific instructions concerning their services, 14: 27-36.

(1) The instructions concerning tongues and interpretations, 14:27,28.

### **Text 14:27,28**

If any man speaketh in a tongue, let it be by two, or at the most three, and that in turn; and let one interpret: but if there is no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

### **Thought Questions 14:27,28**

150. Why the limitation on the number who spoke with tongues?

151. Meaning of the expression “in turn.”

152. In what sense could a tongue speaker speak to himself and to God?

### **Paraphrase 14:27,28**

27. And if any one be moved to speak in a foreign language, let him speak by two, or at most by three sentences at a time, and separately; and let one in the same manner interpret what he says, that the church may be edified.

28. But if there be no interpreter present, let the inspired person be silent in the church at that time: Yet, for his own edification, he may speak inwardly to himself and to God, what is given him by the Spirit.

### **Comment 14:27,28**

**Vs. 27.** Very plain and specific instructions are given for those who would exercise the gift of tongues—let only two or three speak. This was for the purpose of allowing time for other parts of the service. No one was to speak in a foreign language unless there was an interpreter present. Now, just how would the tongue-speaker know there was an interpreter present if he was not speaking in a known foreign language? If it was some heavenly unknown language there would be a need for a direct revelation from heaven as to what was meant—would this always be given to the same man? Could this be the gift of interpretation? Interpretation pre-supposes a knowledge of a language—who could say he knows the language of heaven?

**Vs. 28.** If no interpreter were present (a fact to be ascertained by the one with the gift of tongues), let him be silent and use his gift at home for his own edification—i.e., in private devotions.

(2) The instructions as to prophecy and revelation, 14:29-33a.

(a) The orderly procedure in prophesying, 14:29.



**Text 14:29**

And let the prophets speak by two or three, and let the others discern.

**Thought Questions 14:29**

153. The same orderly procedure is to be followed in the use of the gift of prophecy. Why such a limitation?
154. How long would such a service last?
155. What is the meaning of the word “discern”? Is this the discerning of spirits?
156. To whom does the little phrase “the others” refer?

**Paraphrase 14:29**

Now, let only two or three prophets speak in succession, at one meeting, and let the others who have the gift of discerning spirits, discern whether they have spoken by inspiration or by private suggestion.

**Comment 14:29**

**Vs. 29.** Why limit the use of prophecy to two or three? Is it to show fairness to those who were so fond of the use of tongues? MacKnight solves the problem by referring the “two or three” to two or three sentences—which hardly seems likely. Perhaps it was because there was a certain element of prophecy in the use of tongues—i.e., when they were interpreted—what was to be said when tongues were used? Some edifying revelation of God was given to all through the interpreter—hence the purpose of speaking with understanding was fulfilled.

We believe the use of the word “discern” does indeed refer to those who had the gift of the discerning of Spirits—it evidently was possible to pretend to have a revelation from God and yet be self-deceived. Those with the supernatural power to discern would soon indicate the deficiency.

**Text 14:30-33a**

But if a revelation be made to another sitting by, let the first keep silence. For ye all can prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be exhorted; and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets; for God is not a god of confusion, but of peace.

**Thought Questions 14:30-33a**

157. What is “a revelation”? Why would it be superior to what was being said?
158. How would the prophesying “one by one” cause all to learn?
159. What is meant by the word “exhorted”?
160. Does Paul here mean that the prophets could control the use of the gift of prophecy? In what manner?
161. Why appeal to the nature of God in 33a?

**Paraphrase 14:30-33a**

30. But if to another, who sitteth by hearing a prophet speak, any thing be revealed, let the first finish his discourse and be silent, before the other attempteth to speak.

31. For, by speaking one after another, ye can all deliver one by one, either at that or some subsequent meeting, what is revealed to you, so as all may learn, and all be comforted.

32. For the spiritual gifts of the Christian prophets are under the command of the prophets; so that they can exercise, or forbear to exercise them, as they choose.

33a. Besides, God is not by his inspiration the author of disturbance, but of peace.

**Comment 14:30-33a**

**Vs. 30.** Here is an exception to the principle just stated. If, while some gifted person is prophesying God reveals a message to someone else, the one prophesying is to give preference to the action and message of God. The man with the prophetic gift could evidently exercise it at will—such was not so with the one given a revelation. Let the prophet be silent while this special message is given.

**Vs. 31.** The procedure of the exercise of the gift of prophesy is further elaborated. Paul says—’ ‘it is possible for the prophets to speak one at a time. In this way all may hear, understand and be edified.’ The messages given by the prophets were such that those hearing were greatly encouraged and strengthened in the faith.

**Vs. 32.** The claim by some that they were but passive instruments of the power of God is not true. Paul reminds the Corinthians that the power of expression however divine is none-the-less under the control of the one speaking. The words of Lenski are much to the point: “Hence a prophet may desire to speak and may have something important to convey which has been given him by the divine Spirit and the Word and yet for good reasons may refrain from speaking. Proper self-control is a virtue that any prophet may well cultivate even today” (p. 613).

**Vs. 33a.** The nature of God is appealed to as a reason for an orderly use of the gifts—if such gifts and their use proceed from God then they will reflect the divine nature. God is not the author of confusion—the reason He is not is found in His essential being. He is a God of tranquillity and quiet satisfaction. Such could not be true if confusion reigned through the misuse of the gifts. How could God approve of a practice in violation of His nature?

(3) The restrictions on women in the worship service, 14: 33b-36.

(a) The restriction placed on women, 14:33b, 34.

#### **Text 14:33b, 34**

As in all the churches of the saints, let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law.

#### **Thought Questions 14:33b, 34**

162. Why introduce the subject of the position of women in this context?

163. Just how inclusive is the silence of the women?

164. Does this refer to women speaking in tongues?

165. What constitutes subjection?

166. From what has been said we would hardly conclude the church of Corinth was made up of “saints” —explain.

167. What reference in the law is here mentioned?

#### **Paraphrase 1 4:33b, 34**

33b. Having enjoined the orderly exercise of the spiritual gifts; as in all the churches of the saints is well known.

34. Your women, on pretense of being inspired, have assumed the office of public teachers: But my command is, Let your women be silent in the churches; for it hath not been permitted to them by Christ to teach in public; but they must be in subjection to the men, as also the law of Moses commandeth.

#### **Comment 1 4:33b, 34**

**Vs. 33b.** There has been some discussion as to whether this verse should be thus divided—some commentators would refer it to the statement: “For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.” With this we cannot agree—we much prefer the thought that a new point is here to be developed. The place of the women does indeed relate to proper conduct of those in the church, but it is a separate subject. This direction relates not only to the local condition at Corinth but to all the churches, whether in Corinth or not. We should note that God looks upon man as “in Christ” constituted a saint—not by man’s worthiness but by Christ’s worthiness God calls us into and unto the fullness of the man in Christ.

**Vs. 34.** We refer you to I Timothy 2:11-15 for an enlargement of the same thought of this text. In what sense shall we say the women are to be silent? We must understand this in the context—let them be silent in areas where they are not permitted to speak. We could relate this to speaking in tongues, i.e., that such gifts were not to be exercised by women in the public assemblies. The men are to speak one at a time with the aid of an interpreter—the women are to speak not at all. Women can and are urged to teach other women—but they are not to teach men, for in such a position they are usurping authority over a man—we like the words of Calvin on this thought:

“For someone will say: ‘What is there to prevent them teaching even though they are in subjection?’ I reply that the task of teaching is one that belongs to someone with oversight, and is for that reason inconsistent with being in subjection. For how unsuitable it would be for a woman who is in subjection to one of the members, to be in an authoritative position over the whole body! It is therefore an argument based on incompatibilities; because if the woman is under subjection, she is therefore debarred from having authority to teach in public.” (p. 306—translated by John W. Fraser.)

We urge a reading of the section on the subjection of women in the *Bible Study Textbook—Paul’s Letters to Timothy and Titus* (pp. 55ff.)

(b) The provision for their information, 14:35.

#### **Text 14:35**

And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church.

#### **Thought Questions 14:35**

168. It is not true that women learn nothing from the public meeting—what is meant here?
169. Supposing a woman does not have a husband—how would this apply to her?
170. What is shameful about a woman speaking in church?
171. Just what constitutes “the church”?

#### **Paraphrase 14:35**

35. I do not permit women so much as to ask a question in the church, even on pretence of receiving information. But if they wish to learn any thing, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is an indecent thing for women, on any pretence, to speak in the church.

#### **Comment 14:35**

**Vs. 35.** The learning process for women is not in asking questions in the public meeting—for this could lead to a situation where their proper position is violated. Let them ask their “men-folk” at home. Paul is thinking of a family situation either of a husband and wife or of a father and children. We believe the word translated “husbands” is much more accurately translated “men-folk.” Please remember the circumstances of the meeting of “the whole church” not in a private class—when the whole church is affected by the questions and answers, such instructions *must* prevail. The exception of the single woman with no male connections is not considered in this text—this does not mean they are to violate the divine principle.

(c) The rebuke to the Corinthian arrogance, 14:36.

#### **Text 14:36**

What? Was it from you that the word of God went forth? or came it unto you alone?

#### **Thought Questions 14:36**

172. Such a stinging rebuke was evidently prompted by a serious condition—what was it?
173. Why and how would the Corinthians claim the word of God originated with them?
174. The Corinthians were indeed arrogant—show how this was manifested.

### **Paraphrase 14:36**

36. What? Went the word of God forth into the world from you women? Did Christ employ any of your sex as apostles? Or did the word only come to you by the ministry of the men? How then can ye pretend to teach men?

### **Comment 14:36**

**Vs. 36.** Paul rebukes in a very sharp manner the boastful attitude of the Corinthians. He seems to intimate that the Corinthians knew God's will concerning the matters in which he had corrected them, but they were not willing to change. Perhaps the answer is in the authority of the word—the word of God was sent to correct—not to be corrected. The Corinthians were to allow the word to change them, they wished to change it. It is indeed a serious rebuke—the saints in this city acted as if they were the source of authority and the peculiar object of God's concern—neither was true. God is the authority—expressed in His Word—for all time and all people.

1. The concluding statements, 14:37-40.

a. The authentication of the instructions, 14:37,38.

### **Text 14:37,38**

If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord. But if any man is ignorant, let him be ignorant.

### **Thought Questions 14:37,38**

175. This is the conclusion of three chapters of close discussion. Please give it careful consideration.

Here is a criteria for judging the true prophet or gifted man—what is it?

176: To what “things” did Paul refer?

177. Were there some pretended prophets in the Corinthian church? What was to be done about them?

178. Of what were certain men ignorant? How decide when one was ignorant?

179. Is Paul ignoring the need for instruction among some? Explain.

### **Paraphrase 14:37,38**

37. If any one be really a prophet, or a discernor of spirits, I appeal to him, and require him to acknowledge the things I now write, and all the other things in this Epistle, that they are the commandments of the Lord Christ, given me by inspiration.

38. And if any one, after that, is ignorant that my precepts are the commandments of the Lord, let him be ignorant. His ignorance being willful, I will trouble myself no farther with him.

### **Comment 14:37,38**

**Vs. 37.** Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter of the use and abuse of Spiritual gifts—i.e., as found in chapters 12-14 of this letter: the claim to be inspired of God or to speak the word of God can be tested by its agreement or disagreement with what Paul has written. Paul has no question or hesitancy about his divine authority—he is not asking them to test his word, but to receive and follow it as indeed it is the Word of God.

**Vs. 38.** If there is anyone who will not acknowledge the words of the apostle as the word of God it is proof positive that he does not have the Spiritual gifts he claims. Lenski's translation of this verse is good: “But if anyone does not acknowledge, he himself is not acknowledged.” i.e., if anyone will not acknowledge the divine authority of Paul's message, he is not acknowledged by God.

b. The concluding admonitions on the subject, 14:39,40.

### **Text 14:39,40**

## SHOULD I SPEAK IN TONGUES?

Wherefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. But let all things be done decently and in order.

### **Thought Questions 14:39,40**

180. What does desire have to do with prophecy?
181. Paul had forbidden speaking in tongues—what does he mean by his statement here?
182. Specify just what decency and order means as to tongues and prophecy.

### **Paraphrase 14:39,40**

39. Wherefore, brethren, prophecy being so excellent a gift, earnestly desire to prophesy. And hinder not any to speak in foreign languages, if there is one present to interpret.

40. Let all things be done decently and in order in your religious assemblies: the spiritual men avoiding envy and strife; and the women being silent.

### **Comment 14:39,40**

**Vs. 39.** Paul began by explaining the advantage of prophecy—he is to conclude with the same thought. His prohibitions on the use of this gift are not given to discourage its use—indeed, without it the church would be greatly hindered. Tongues also have their place in the service—because their abuse has been corrected does not mean they should be forbidden.

**Vs. 40.** Here is a principle to prevail in all our work and worship—let God’s approval rest upon whatever we do—it will then be decent—let it be done in such a manner that no one will feel slighted and no one will be given a prominence he does not deserve—this will be in order—let no confusion reign any of the services, God does not approve of it and man is not edified.

