

Matters of Worship: Part 3

The Place of Spiritual Gifts

First Corinthians 12

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • May 1, In the year of our Lord Christ, 2019

I. 12.1–3 | Mute Idols vs The Teaching Spirit

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: **2** You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. **3** Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

A. What is the connection between spiritual gifts and idols?

1. Why did Paul introduce spiritual gifts by reminding them of when they were led by dumb, that is mute idols?
2. I think the connection is made clear when we note what he said in verse 3.

B. Why is it that no one speaking by the Spirit can say Jesus is accursed?

C. How does a person come to believe that Jesus is Lord?

1. The Holy Spirit is the one who delivered the information.
2. We examine the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, and that leads us to conclude that Jesus of Nazareth is Lord.

II. 12.4–11 | The Same God in All Christians

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. **5** There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. **6** And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. **7** But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: **8** for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, **9** to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, **10** to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. **11** But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

- A. Does the same Spirit, Lord, and God work in us, although we have different ministries?
- B. Why does the Spirit bless each one?
 - 1. He gives to each one for the profit of the whole body.
 - 2. This shows that if you are a Christian, you must be an active member of the church.
- C. What were the gifts that the Spirit gave to the body of Christ in the first century?
- D. What is Paul's point in verse 11?
 - 1. It is the Spirit who makes us differ.
 - 2. Therefore, we cannot boast.
 - a) One person is not better than the other.
 - b) We should give glory to the Spirit rather than to ourselves.

III. 12.12–13 | **We Entered the Body the Same Way**

12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

- A. To what did Paul liken the body of Christ?
 - 1. He compared it to the human body.
 - 2. Think of the spiritual body of Christ as you do your own body.
- B. By or literally “in” how many Spirits were we baptized?
- C. Into how many bodies were we baptized?
 - 1. Is there one body for Jews and another for Greeks?
 - 2. Is there one body for slaves and another for the free?
- D. All the different kinds of people drink of how many Spirits?

IV. 12.14–21 | **A Body Has Many Members**

14 For in fact the body is not one member but many. 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? 18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. 19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be? 20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

A. How many parts comprise a body?

1. If a part of our bodies concludes that it is not like another part, does that mean it is not of the body?
2. Who has placed our body parts?
3. If our bodies were comprised of only one part, what kind of body would it be?

B. If a part of the body were to conclude that another part was not like the first part, would that mean the second part was not part of the body?

V. 12.22–24a | Honoring the Less Honorable

22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. 23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unrepresentable parts have greater modesty, 24a but our representable parts have no need.

A. Which part of our bodies are weaker?

B. Some parts of our bodies we do not see as honorable, yet how necessary are they?

1. We actually give more care to those parts.
2. The less honorable or unrepresentable parts, we hide.

VI. 12.24b–27 | All Members Suffer with One Suffering Member

24b But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, 25 that there should be no schism in the body, but that the

members should have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

- A. Why did God give greater honor to the parts of our bodies that lack it?
 - 1. He does not want our bodies to be divided, fighting against one another.
 - 2. He wants our bodies to care for all parts.
- B. How do our bodies react when one part hurts?
- C. How do our bodies react when one part is honored?
- D. Having written of our bodies, to what did Paul transition?
 - 1. What we know and understand about our bodies, we should apply to the body of Christ and its individual members.
 - 2. Learn to see the things of this world illustrating matters of the Spirit.
 - a) Think of the parables of Christ.
 - b) The Gospel According to John provides many examples.

VII.12.28–31 | What God Has Appointed

28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

- A. Why was there an order to the gifts?
 - 1. Why would the apostles come first?
 - a) They were official ambassadors of Jesus Christ.
 - b) They had the full range of miraculous gifts and they could transfer gifts to other by the laying on of hands.
 - 2. Notice that prophesying and teaching come before miracles.

- a) Why would that be?
 - (1) Miracles were temporary.
 - (2) Miracles served teaching.
 - b) Positions of teaching the truth remain.
 - c) Therefore, those things are greater.
- B. How would you answer Paul's rhetorical questions in verses 29 and 30?
- C. Why would a Christian in the first century want to desire the best gifts?
- 1. Remember that miracles served a purpose.
 - 2. That purpose was limited.
 - 3. Miracles did not save people from their sin.
 - 4. The greater gifts are those involved in teaching and preaching truth.
- D. How could something be more excellent than what Paul has listed in First Corinthians 12?
- 1. He will show how there is something greater in chapter 13.