

1 Corinthians 12:1-11 1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. 2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. 3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. 8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

We must remember that this first letter to the church at Corinth is essentially answers to questions that had been asked of the apostle Paul previously. So, at some point in the past, the church had asked the apostle a question about spiritual gifts and what follows is his answer. The word "gifts" is inserted in the King James Version to clarify the subject of Paul's focus. In Young's Literal Translation, the phrase is "spiritual things".

2a Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

The phrase "ye were" is translated from a single word in the Greek: en (ane). The members of the body of Jesus Christ at Corinth were no longer what they once had been: Gentiles. They were now something different, something new.

Acts 15:13-18 13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Simeon hath declared how **God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.** 15 **And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,** 16 **After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:** 17 **That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.** 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

They were no longer Gentiles. They were being built up into the "tabernacle of David", the body of Jesus Christ, the church of Jesus Christ. They were Christians as part of his body then, as we are Christians as part of his body today.

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for **ye are all one in Christ Jesus.**

Colossians 3:11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but **Christ is all, and in all.**

1 Corinthians 1:13a Is Christ divided?

Here lies the primary problem with the visible body of Jesus Christ in our nation and community today: it has been divided for nearly two thousand years (beginning circa 400 A.D.) and Satan, knowing it is already weakened with its many divisions (denominations), has slowly reintroduced the divisions found in the first century through the anti-Christ secular/humanist/communist philosophy known as Critical Theory, where, even in the church there are groups designated as the oppressed and the oppressors.

2b Ye know that ye were Gentiles, **carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.**

"These dumb idols" being those things that used to divide them when they were Gentiles, that they had worshipped, that they had fought for, that they had found their worth in, that they had dedicated their lives unto. Those idols were "dumb", not as in "stupid" (although a case could be made for the stupidity of such divisive idolatry, but Paul means something else here), but as in "unable to speak words or voiceless".

Psalms 115:4-8 4 **Their idols** are silver and gold, **the work of men's hands.** 5 They have mouths, but **they speak not:** eyes have they, but **they see not:** 6 They have ears, but **they hear not:** noses have they, but **they smell not:** 7 They have hands, but **they handle not:** feet have they, but **they walk not: neither smell they through their throat.** 8 **They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.**

Those who are "carried away (led) unto...dumb idols" are "like unto them": they are the dumb, blind, deaf, mute, unfeeling, senseless, stagnant "work of men's hands". And Paul writes unto the Corinthians, that the Holy Ghost, sent from God the Father through God the Son, is not like that: He speaks, sees, hears, knows, understands, and gives. The Holy Ghost *in us* speaks *to us* through the revealed word of God in the canon of scriptures and through God's called and ordained men in the ages past and present.

Mark 13:11 But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: **for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.**

Luke 12:12 For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour **what ye ought to say.**

John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is **the Holy Ghost**, whom the Father will send in my name, **he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance**, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which **the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God**, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

1 Peter 1:10-12 10 Of which salvation **the prophets** have **enquired** and **searched** diligently, who **prophesied** of the grace that should come unto you: 11 **Searching** what, or what manner of time **the Spirit of Christ which was in them** did signify, when **it testified** beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by **them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven;** which things the angels desire to look into.

2 Peter 1:20-21 20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of **the scripture** is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but **holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.**

The question from the church at Corinth must have been, in-part, how they could discern if a man was speaking the words of God by the gifts of God's Spirit, so Paul responds by providing them some ground rules.

3a Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth **Jesus accursed:** and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

This first rule is the negative: if a man teaches that Jesus Christ, including him as head and us as body (the church), is cursed (is not the Son of God, is not risen, is not ascended to God the Father, is not reigning with all power in heaven and earth) , then that man is not speaking by the Holy Ghost. In the letter to the church of Galatia, Paul condemns those who, without the work of God's Spirit in them, are deceived as they preach another gospel.

Galatians 1:6-9 6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto **another gospel**: 7 Which is not another; but **there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ**. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, **preach any other gospel unto you** than that which we have preached unto you, **let him be accursed**. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, **If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed**.

3b Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: **and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost**.

This second rule is the positive: if a man teaches that Jesus Christ is "the Lord" (*kuros*: "supreme in authority" (Strong's) and "he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; master, lord" (Thayer's)), then that man is speaking by the Holy Ghost. In the gospel of Matthew, Peter confesses "that Jesus is the Lord" and Jesus confirms that Peter could not say such a thing on his own accord.

Matthew 16:15-17 15 He saith unto them, **But whom say ye that I am?** 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, **Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God**. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: **for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven**.

We ought to consider both of these rules seriously and *mark and avoid* those who "pervert the gospel of Christ" in salvation and who deny that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God" in power, causing division in the churches of God.

Romans 16:17-18 17 Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them**. 18 For **they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ**, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

And we ought to *mark and follow* those who proclaim the true gospel of Jesus Christ and who proclaim that Jesus Christ is the Lord over all things in heaven and earth, unifying the churches of God.

Philippians 3:15-17 15 Let us therefore, as many as be **perfect**, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. 16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, **let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing**. 17 Brethren, **be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample**.

God is a God of order, not chaos. The body of Jesus Christ is not to be divided. God speaks to and unifies his people by his revealed word through men to whom he has given gifts of his Spirit.

Ephesians 4:1-16 1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep **the unity of the Spirit** in the bond of peace. 4 There is **one body**, and **one Spirit**, even as ye are called in **one hope** of your calling; 5 **One Lord, one faith, one baptism**, 6 **One God and Father** of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. 7 But **unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ**. (Continued)

(Ephesians 4:1-16 Continued) 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and **gave gifts unto men.** 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11 **And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;** 12 **For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:** 13 Till we all come **in the unity of the faith**, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

The underlying current of the culture (i.e. what is worshipped) in our age is that diversity is division, and diversity must result in equity where one party (the oppressor) must make reparations to another party (the oppressed) and that those actions will (must) result in inclusion of one party with another. But God does not work in that manner among his people. God unifies diversity in Jesus Christ.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

"Gifts" being "spiritual gifts" (see verses 8-10) and the focus of the question from the church and the answer Paul gives to them. The gifts are diverse, varied, unique to each member of the body of Christ, but given for "the unity of the faith" by the "same Spirit".

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

"Administrations" being "the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ". The manner in which men minister to the churches is diverse but done in submission to the rules and according to the order established by "the same Lord".

1 Corinthians 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

"Operations" being the visible working out of the Spirit's gifts given to men and the operations of Spirit-filled men as "the same God" wills them in his providence. Men work (use their gifts and minister according to their gifts) as God works by the Holy Ghost dwelling in them.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

The root word of "manifestation" means "to render apparent" or "to make visible or known what was invisible or unknown". So, the gifts, administrations, and operations of the Holy Ghost, the Son of God, and God the Father in "every man", result in something that is visible and tangible and profitable to all in the church and "maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love". It is the diversity of those things that makes the building up of the church in unity possible.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

"Wisdom", "knowledge", and "faith" are the invisible gifts that unify the church and "healing", "miracles", "prophecy", "discerning", and (speaking and interpreting) "tongues" are the *visible* gifts that unify the church by "the same Spirit". One gift is not greater than another gift. The man with the gift of healing is not oppressed by the man with the gift of discerning spirits. The man with the gift of wisdom is not oppressing the man with the gift of faith. They are all of God through Jesus Christ by the Holy Ghost for the purpose of unifying, not dividing, the church.

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

It is by the work of the Holy Ghost, "that one and the selfsame Spirit", that God accomplishes his will, bringing his kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. He "divides to every man" by giving them a diversity of gifts to serve and to order his church from the cornerstone of Jesus Christ, enabling the church to go, disciple, baptize, and teach the nations to obey the Lord of lords and King of kings.

Amen.