

## “Spiritual Gifts and The Truth about Tongues”

1 Corinthians 12-14

Woodlake Baptist Church

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### 1 Corinthians 12:1-3 (Introduction)

**Introduction:** Paul continues with the “**now concerning**” (περι δε) section so as to answer the questions that the church wanted answered. Paul is going to give doctrinal help to the church that is in divisions, doctrinal disorder, and all out trouble. This is not a pat on the back or pleasant conversation that they will be having. This church is getting spanked.

As I have taught and preached over the years about spiritual gifts and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, I have been dressed down and challenged vehemently by tongue speakers and charismatics about my beliefs on this topic. Many of whom are ignorant of the scriptures.

It is not my intent to offend, but let the doctrinal chips fall where they may. You may address me on the topic but please bring your bible.

**History, Background and Context:** The church was not to be praised as in 11:2. Babylonian and Mystery Religion practices had made their way into the church. In 12:2 Paul sets the context of the next three chapters.

#### 1 Cor 12:2

You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols.

NIV

In Revelation 17:1, 5 the mystery religions are mentioned. All these problems can be traced back to Babylon and the Tower of Babel. They will find its destruction in the final judgment. John actually saw the words “*Mystery Babylon*” written on the harlots head in Revelation.

The tower is significant in that it represents man’s attempt to reach God on man’s terms. Nimrod’s wife, Semiramis, was the first high priestess of the Babel religion and founder of the ancient mystery religions.

**Quote:** John MacArthur notes... *“According to the cult of Ishtar, Tammuz was conceived by a sunbeam, a counterfeit version of Jesus’ virgin birth. Tammuz corresponded to Baal in Phoenicia, Osiris in Egypt, Eros in Greece, and Cupid in Rome. In every case, the worship of those gods and goddesses was associated with sexual immorality. The celebration of lent has no basis in scripture, but developed from a pagan celebration of Semiramis’s mourning for forty days over the death of Tammuz (Check Ezekiel 8:14) before his alleged resurrection- another of Satan’s mythical counterfeits.*

*The mystery religions originated the idea of baptismal regeneration, being born again merely through the rite of water baptism, and the practice of mutilation and flagellation to atone for sins or gain spiritual favor. They also began the custom of pilgrimages, which many religions follow today, and the paying of penance for forgiveness of sins for oneself and for others.*

*Several pagan practices were especially influential in the church at Corinth. Perhaps the most important, and certainly the most obvious, was that of **ecstasy** (emphasis mine), considered to be the highest expression of religious experience. Because it seemed supernatural and because it seemed dramatic and often bizarre, the practice strongly appealed to the natural man. And because*

*the Holy Spirit had performed many miraculous works in that apostolic age, some Corinthian Christians confused those true wonders with the false wonders counterfeited in the ecstasies of paganism.*

*Ecstasy (Greek, ekstasia, a term not used in scripture) was held to be a supernatural, sensuous communion with a deity. Through frenzied hypnotic chants and ceremonies, worshippers experienced semiconscious euphoric feelings of oneness with the god or goddess. Often the ceremony would be preceded by vigils and feasting, and would even include drunkenness (see Eph 5:18; 1 Cor 11:21). Contemplation of sacred objects, whirling dances, fragrant incense, chants and other such physical and psychological stimuli customarily were used to induce the ecstasy, which would be in the form of an out-of-body trance or an unrestrained sexual orgy. The trance is reflected in some forms of Hindu Yoga, in which a person becomes insensitive to pain, and in the Buddhist goal of escaping into Nirvana, the divine nothingness. Sexual ecstasies were common in many ancient religions and were so much associated with Corinth that the term Corinthianize meant to indulge in extreme sexual immorality. A temple to Bacchus still stands in the ruins of Baalbek (in modern Lebanon) as a witness to the debauchery of the mystery religions.*

*One of the chief evidences of the Spiritual immaturity of the Corinthian Christians was lack of discernment. If an occult practice seemed to have Supernatural effect, they assumed it was from God. If a priest or soothsayer performed a miracle, they assumed it was by God's power. Like many Christians today, they believed that if something "works" it must be right and good. Some of the believers, however, realized that the confusion, division, and immoral practices that characterized many of the church members could not be of God. They asked*

*Paul to tell them how to determine what was of the Holy Spirit and what was of some other spirit (cf. 1 John 4:1; Deut 13).*

The situation in Corinth was just this. The **ethne** (Greek for pagans), were drawn and saved and came into the church. There were also those in the church that were not saved. ***The influence of the mystery religions was making its mark on the church.*** If you had visited this church you would have seen people in division, discord, and all manner of sinful behavior. Confusion had manifested itself in the worship services, the Lord's Supper, and all areas of ministry life (1 Cor 11:21).

We are still there today. People will believe anything that looks like a miracle or invokes some strong emotional response. Christians today will try anything and have no discernment. *If you confront people with the truth of the scripture about their false doctrines and emotionalism, they will say, "Don't confuse me with the fact, I already have my mind made up."*

People that are into emotionalism and that play church are setting themselves up for an enormous fall. Dr. Rogers used to say, *"believe in miracles, but trust in Jesus."*

### **2 Thessalonians 2:9-12**

*9 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, 10 and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie 12 and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.*

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## I. The Foundation to Chapters 12-14: (verses 1-3)

**Verse 1:** “**Now Concerning,**” Paul continues to answer questions.

- The concern is about “spiritual gifts.” The word “gifts” is actually not in the text at this point. The Greek is neuter or masculine singular and is translated as “spirituals” or “spiritual things.” The context, however, is seen in the next few verses where the gifts are listed. It is appropriate to translate this as spiritual gifts.
- The purpose here is to inform the church about gifts. It is biblical to say that God intends for us to know the truth about spiritual gifts. Gifts should not be that hard. I don’t think they are.
- We should know the truth about gifts. It is important because ... “Satan will try to counterfeit the Spirit’s gifts, and he will try to induce believers to ignore, neglect, misuse, abuse, and pervert them. Consequently, Paul’s teaching here is critical” (J Mac p.282, In Loc).

**Verse 2:** As pagans, many in the church were led astray by **ἄφωνος** (mute or dumb) idols. The word means speechless. The people had been led astray.

- To be led astray is **apago**. It is used of prisoners who were led to their execution. It is used in Mark 14:44 of Jesus who was led away by the soldiers to be executed. Remember this, the first word Paul has for the church about gifts is a warning not to be led astray by Pagan practices.
- **Misconception:** Notice who is really in bondage. The lost and the immature believer thinks that Christianity hems

them in and does not allow freedom. That's wrong. The lost man is the true captive.

- He is captive while he yet speaks. He has no power over sin; he is not justified; nor does he have forgiveness for sin and no access to hope. We, on the other hand, have freedom, forgiveness, and hope in Christ. We are more than conquerors.
- Jesus was led away to Calvary so that I would not have to be led away.

**Verse 3:** Proof, proof, proof that the church in Corinth was in error and confused. Someone who was in a frenzied, emotional rage, was speaking in tongues, or while flopping around on the floor, cursed the name of Jesus.

**Greek:** *αναθεμα* or *anathema*. To be accursed by the gods.

### **Two Truths:**

1. You cannot call Jesus cursed if you belong to Him.
2. You cannot call Jesus Lord if you don't belong to Him.
  - The gospel says that cursed is every man that hangs on a tree. That is true, but it was misunderstood. He was cursed for us. He was made sin for us, but He never sinned. They misunderstood the doctrine and missed heaven by a few yards of understanding. They were close to heaven but going to hell. They knew the words of the doctrine but not the God or truth of it.
  - **The foundation of Paul's writing about spiritual gifts is the church's questions about spiritual gifts and their gross misuse of them. There was a group in the church that recognized that the gifts were being misused.**

- It is quite strange that a church this carnal would want to know about spiritual things. Thank God for that remnant.

## II. The Explanation: Verses 4-11 (Part 2)

**Verse 4:** Here Paul deals specifically with spiritual gifts, and unlike verse 1, this verse does use the word for “*gifts*.” The word is **χαρισμα (charisma)**. The root of this word relates to grace. The word for grace is **χαρις, or (charis)**. That makes the spiritual gifts, gifts of grace or grace gifts.

- That means you cannot buy, beg or borrow the gifts. They are given by God. I do not want to be mean or unkind, but listen carefully. Spiritual gifts are not prayed for or given to people that deserve them. The Holy Spirit gives the gifts by grace and grace alone. I do not care how many people say they got their gift by begging for it. That’s not true. Jimmy Swaggart claimed that the gifts of tongues and the baptism of the Holy Ghost rolled off his grandmother and indwelt him. That’s unbiblical and a lie. Charismatics say you should beg for the gift of tongues for salvation. That’s not biblical. Paul actually tells us to desire the gifts of prophecy over the gift of tongues. There is nothing wrong with desiring godly spiritual things, if you have pure motives. However, any gift given will be given by grace, not merit. If salvation is by grace, so are spiritual gifts.

**Greek:** “**Gifts,**” means endowment or supernatural faculty. It refers to qualification. God gives you the qualifications to do what He has called you to do.

**Greek:** “Diversities, Varieties, and Different kinds- This refers to the diversity of the gifts. The different gifts are given by God. The unity of the body is tied up in the diversity of the gifts. For

example, the body is a unit in its existence but it has many different parts. Unity is not uniformity.

- Diversity or variety is **diaireseis**. It refers to apportionments, allotments and distributions. Notice verse 11. The Lord gives the gifts individually as He will. He allots the gifts. A charismatic told me we all have several gifts and the bible says so. I ask where He got that, and he said 12:11. The KJV says, God gives the gifts severally as He will. This is pure ignorance. **Severally means individually**. This is biblical illiteracy at its finest. God gives us at least one gift designed for us personally or individually. *You will see later on that I believe that each gift is made up of a mixture of other gifts. I will explain as we go along this road.*
- We do know that the gifts can be divided up into two main categories. Speaking gifts and serving gifts.

#### **1 Peter 4:10-11**

*10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.*

*11 If anyone **speaks**, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone **serves**, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

*NIV*

**Quote:** (John MacArthur, p. 291, in loc) *“The New Testament contains several lists of the categories of spiritual gifts, one of which is here in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28 (see also Rom. 12:6-8; cf. 1 Pet. 4:11). Bible scholars do not agree on the exact number and distinction of kinds of gifts. Because the scriptural lists are not identical, it seems clear that God did not intend to give His church either a rigid or a precise and exhaustive compilation, but*

*rather general categories. One should be careful not to over define the gifts. Because they may resist over classification, there is not much value in taking tests, formal or informal, to determine what spiritual gifts we have. A believer's gifts can be an overlapping combination, taken in different proportions from the categories of gifts. One person may be obviously strong in a single gift, such as teaching. Another may not be strong in any one gift but have some measure of three or four categories. It is best to see each person's gift as a unique blend of the categories of giftedness, granted to that individual in connection with his or her traits and experiences and the needs of the church. **Each believer becomes as unique spiritually as his fingerprints are physically.***

- I do not know if I could have said that in that manner, but I have always believed that. There are so many paradigms and rigid categories on gifts that have quite frankly never made sense to me. If God wanted it that way, all the lists of gifts would have been the same.

**Illustration:** Dr. Stanley has helped us greatly. He was the first pastor in the 70's and 80's to be popular with a mega church. I do not know if his ideas of spiritual gifts originated with him or if he got it elsewhere? We all stand on the shoulders of others. When Dr. Stanley spoke of motivational gifts and a manifestation of them, most saw it as a simple and effective way to better understand spiritual gifts. I dare not criticize Dr. Stanley for he was a godly man. But I do disagree with that method of viewing spiritual gifts. I will explain as we go along. The more we study, the more we learn. I love John MacArthur's views and will also add a few notes of my own as we go. John MacArthur comes as close to anyone I have read that agrees with my views.

**Verse 5:** The key word in verse 5 is **ministries**. Verse 4 says there are different gifts. Verse 5 says there are different

ministries. The word for ministries is the same word we have for deacon (**διακονια**). The word is used by Paul to teach us about service. That's what a deacon does; he serves. The vast ministries that are related to church are endless. That's why the gifts are various and endless in their characteristics.. **The combinations are endless.** That's why the lists are different in scripture. Ministries are different; people are different; gifts are different. All combined for the edification of the body. That's why two people can have the same gift and it look different as it manifests its characteristics in the body. That may be what Dr. Stanley was talking about (manifestation of gifts). For example, two preachers that are quite dynamic may both have the gift of preaching, but their ministries and styles of preaching may be quite different. One preacher may even have mercy or discernment with his gift of preaching. The other preachers may be more prophetic and have less mercy... both may still have the gift of teaching and preaching.

- The gifts are not for self-edification or self-glory. This verse tells us that the gifts are for ministry. We draw from this that we are to be servants and we are to be busy. People who are not serving are miserable. ***This means that... “in a sense”... all gifts are service gifts.***

**Quote:** John MacArthur says, “*A gift exercised in private is a perverted gift. God gives His gifts to us for others.*” I concur!

**Verse 6:** There are differing effects (KJV), or kinds of workings (NIV), or activities (ESV). This is why the gifts look different in operation.

**Greek:** **ενεργημα**— operations or effects or workings. It refers to what is worked out. It's the energy that the Holy Spirit gives your gift or combination of gifts. This is **ergon** or the word for work,

function, or task, e.g., ergonomics. The gifts are fashioned in the believer for a certain purpose... they fit us perfectly.

- Why are there no characteristics listed for each gift? Because verse 6 tells us that God is responsible for the different workings (ergonomics) of the gifts. There are no two gifts alike. Each person has a specifically designed gift that manifests itself or works itself out in that person's life like no other person. God takes each person's personality, talents, education, life experiences, Christian maturity, and tailor makes gifts just for that person. Their gift is as unique as a spiritual finger print. None of the lists in scripture are identical. Who is to say which might be motivational? They are all useable gifts and they are individually given for diverse service and empowered by the God who gave them. I believe we actually have a combination of gifts, tailor-made for the church you attend. I also believe that your gift or gifts can change according to the needs of the body. Your gifts may change depending on the ministries in which you are involved or church you attend.
- We actually glean characteristics about the gifts throughout scripture from reading about Christian's lives. Yet, each person walking with God may manifest a gift differently than another with the same gift. Don't get locked into what the gifts look like.
- God will not give a gift and not empower it.

### **Romans 12:3**

*3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the **measure** of faith God has given you.*

*NIV*

- The context of Romans 12:3 is gifts. Don't get proud, just serve Jesus. He gave you at least one gift... then empowered it... then gave you the faith to use it. Don't get cocky. Some people get proud of their self when God uses them. Joy is not conceit, but peacocks can't be used.

**Illustration:** I have seen people on staff at successful churches take credit for the growth. I was told one time that a recreation ministry was the reason a church was growing. I said not true. Do away with the gym and the church will survive. Do away with the sanctuary and it all collapses or you will just have the YMCA. We are all riding in the wave of grace, don't get cocky. You might be getting blessed because you are close to one who God has chosen to bless.

That church had a recreation ministry that was growing, but the pulpit was dead. The church needed help. That became fatal to both in time.

God varies His blessings according to His will. If you want to pray for something, pray for God's grace on the success and energy He provides for your work. Pray for a hundred-fold energy.

### **Matthew 13:23**

*23 But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."*

*NIV*

- Don't seek the effects of other's gifts. The Corinthians wanted the outward speaking gifts, those that seemed to be successful, popular, and powerful (especially speaking in tongues). You are perfectly gifted, sovereignly gifted, and uniquely gifted. You have a unique gift and ministry. Don't covet other's gifts.

- Notice that we are again reminded that unity is important without uniformity. Verses 4-6 speak of the **same Spirit**, the **same Lord**, and the **same God**. The trinity is in perfect unity but not necessarily uniformity. Continually, we see in scripture the importance of unity and body life. The trinity is one in essence and three in person.

**Verse 7:** The manifestation of the gifts is given to each one. I take that to mean exactly what it says. Each person has a different manifestation of their gifts (In other words, how it is seen functioning in the body). Your gift may or may not be a combination of gifts. The verse actually says that the *Spirit* is what is manifested. It also says that it is for the common good. Depending on your translation, the word “**each**” may be in your text between 1-3 times. The HCSB really catches the nuance of the verse with three uses of the word “each.” *Each gift, for each person, for each production or outcome.* I really like this translation.

- The manifestation is not to show off the gifts and the Christian, but to exhibit God. To show off Jesus, that is the purpose!!! Each person is given a gift, or combination of gifts, in order to grow the body so that it will be able to manifest Christ to the world. All for the common good.
- Manifestation, in the original, means exhibition. ***The use of your gift puts the Spirit (Jesus) on display.***
- Each person is given the ability to manifest the trinity. The gifts are given by the Spirit. The ministries are assigned by the Lord and the effects are energized or worked out by God. All this done for the common good of the body.

### **III. The Manifestation or Administration of The Spirit: (The Gifts) 1 Corinthians 12:8-11, 28-31; Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:3-13**

### **1 Corinthians 12:7-11**

8 To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

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### **Romans 12:4-8**

4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.

If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. 7 If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; 8 if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

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### **Ephesians 4:11-13**

11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

NIV

All three lists that follow are different and unique. How shall we define spiritual gifts?

**Defined:** “A spiritual gift is a miraculous, supernatural spiritual faculty, or attribute, given by the Holy Spirit, to every person who receives Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, according to God’s grace for use in the context of the body of Christ.”

**Five established biblical facts about gifts:**

1. Gifts are for the edification of the body, not personal use.
2. All believers have at least one gift or a combination of several gifts unique to you.
3. Gifts are given at salvation.
4. They are given by grace, developed by grace, empowered by the Spirit (1 Cor.12:6) and used through faith (Rom.12:3) that was also given by grace.
5. They are a supernatural spiritual faculty.
6. We are to grow and develop our gift.
7. Gifts can change with the needs of the body.

**The importance of you knowing your gift:**

1. You personally benefit from your gift.
2. The church benefits from your gift.
3. Gifts help you establish God’s will for your life.
4. So you may develop your gift.

**Results of discovery:**

1. You know you service or spiritual job better.
2. Your attitude changes towards others in the body. You know where you fit in. You understand why others do what they do. Understanding reduces conflict.
3. The body matures (Eph. 4:12-16).
4. Numerical growth takes place (Eph. 4:16).
5. God gets glory (1 Peter 4:11).
6. Jesus is manifested.

## What Spiritual gifts are not:

1. Natural talents. However, talents are enhanced by spiritual gifts and spiritual gifts are enhanced by talents. They work together. I don't care what others say!
2. Fruit of the Spirit. But, we are to develop gifts as we develop the fruit of the spirit. Spiritual maturity enhances both. *It is my belief that if a Christian does not develop the fruit of the spirit that their spiritual gifts will not be effective. I believe they are inextricably connected. Both come from the Spirit!*
3. Roles you play. It's who you are not what you do.

## How to discover you gift:

1. **Explore:** The best way to explore is to first start with your passion. What do you love to do? Where are your interests? Learn all the gifts and study them as if you might have all the gifts. Serve in many areas of the church and see how it goes.
2. **Experiment:** Try areas of service until you find your passion. Many people learn the gifts and serve in areas that are not their gifts. For example, many become great teachers that do not have the gift of teaching. We all are to learn and show mercy even if that is not our gift. Don't get locked into what a test told you or what a friend told you. Let the Spirit lead you into what He wants you to do. Have fun with it. *Service has to be done whether we like the job or not, i.e. nursery.* We also have an obligation to live according to the Spirit not just spiritual gifts.
3. **Examine:** Philippians 2:13. *"For it is God which works in you to will and to act according to His good pleasure."* Did you enjoy the work you did? Was it fulfilling?

4. **Evaluate:** Were you effective? Do people in the body encourage you to continue? Did you get good comments or bad comments from others? How did you feel when you served? Did you add to the kingdom or take away from it? Don't be modest, just simply seek the truth. If you are good at it, remember that God did it. It's okay to admit you are good at something.

### **1 Corinthians 12:8-11, 28**

- Wisdom-
- Knowledge-
- Faith-
- Gifts of healing-
- Miraculous power-
- Prophecy-
- Distinguishing between spirits-
- Different tongues-
- Interpretation of tongues-
- **Apostles-**
- Helps-
- Administration-
- Celibacy: 1 Corinthians 7:7
- Hospitality: 1 Peter 4:9-10
- Missionary Gift: Ephesians 3:6-9
- Intercession- Some see this as a gift. I see it as a calling to all.

### **1 Corinthians 12:12-13**

12 The **body** is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. 13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into **one body** — whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free — and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

### **Romans 12:3-8**

- **Prophecy-**
- **Serving-**
- **Teaching-**
- Encouragement/exhortation-
- Giving-
- Leadership-
- Mercy-

### **Romans 12:4-6**

*4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we who are many form **one body**, and each member belongs to all the others.*

*NIV*

### **Ephesians 4:3-13**

- **Apostles-**
- **Prophets-**
- Evangelist-
- Shepherds/pastor/**teachers-**
- **Service-**

### **Ephesians 4:12-13**

*...so that the **body** of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

## **The Gifts and Their Characteristics**

**Wisdom:** This is the Greek word “**Sophia.**” Paul says that one is given the “**word**” of “**wisdom.**” Anytime the bible uses the word **λογος** it is important. It usually refers to God’s Word or at least intimates it.

- This is wisdom that allows one to understand God, His will, and His Word. Worldly wisdom has its place and is not always evil or worldly. We all need earthly wisdom to do our trades, live easier, and live productive lives. Good old fashion wisdom is not a bad thing. Yet, this is God's spiritual wisdom that allows us to understand His will and way more perfectly.
- The bible says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The more you fear God, the more wisdom you have. This is the ability to apply useful and spiritual help to life's difficult situations. This is the ability to recall biblical solutions to spiritual problems.
- The scripture calls wisdom supreme (Proverbs 4:7). Wisdom calls out in the streets and comes from the mouth of the Lord. The proverbs are full of advice concerning wisdom as well as the rest of scriptures.

**James 3:17**

*17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.*

**Colossians 1:9**

*9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.*

**Ephesians 1:17**

*17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.*

- This wisdom that is a spiritual gift is of a greater intensity for the person that has it, but we are all called by God to seek growth in the area of wisdom. You may not have the

spiritual gift of wisdom, but you do need to have wisdom. That is why I say we are to grow in all the gifts. Wisdom is not just for those who have that spiritual gift. That would not be practical or biblical (Wisdom and the Plan of God, 1 Cor 2).

**Knowledge:** This is the Greek word *gnosis*. This is a very popular NT word that is used many times in the NT (29 times). It speaks of experiential knowledge. It is referred to as a word of knowledge. This word or gift speaks of perceiving and understanding the truth. Some people have a super natural gift for recognizing the truths of God's word. Many people with this gift will perceive and warn us that there is a heresy or falsehood on the horizon. These people have red flags in their souls. Those red flags are raised when they understand something is contrary to God's truth, which is found in His word.

- Wisdom and understanding go together. These Christians have a great way to communicate God's truth. You can see that every pastor should be able to use this gift. That's why I say God gives these spiritual gifts in measures. We should all be able to exhibit these gifts in some measure. The educated and uneducated alike use this gift in many ways.
- Many today, try to say they have a gift or word of knowledge that allows them to go around proclaiming new revelation. Some actually, say they get direct information from God about other's sin and God's will for the church or for individuals. That's not the biblical word of truth. This word does not mean that. There was a time when the canon of scripture was not closed and God did speak to His bible writers and prophets, but those days are gone. The first sign of a false prophet today is for him to claim new revelation. In the church in Corinth, they had no competed bible (Canon). Today, you can go check for

yourself what I have preached. In their day, God gave certain members gifts to understand, and discern truth, so as to protect the body from heresy.

- You don't need someone with the gift of knowledge to tell you anything. The Holy Spirit lives in you and you have the Word of God yourself. Trust that over the charlatans.

### **1 Timothy 2:3-4**

*3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants **all** men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.*

### **1 Timothy 6:20-21**

*20 Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is **falsely called knowledge**, 21 which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith.*

**Faith:** The Greek word is **pistis**. This word refers to assurance, belief, and faith. This is a person with an enormous amount of trust in God's truth. We have saving faith, and faith that we live day by day with, but this is a faith that is given by God to allow certain folks to lay hold of the promises of God in His word.

- Prayer is actually connected to faith. James tells us that the prayer of a righteous man avails much. He goes on to tell us of Elijah and how his faith helped him as he prayed. Abraham and many others in the bible are associated with faith. The Saints throughout the years that have changed the world through faith are numerous.
- Hudson Taylor, William Carey, Amy Carmichael, Corrie Ten Boom, Annie Armstrong, Lottie Moon, Spurgeon, George Muller, Billy Sunday, Bunyan, and countless others that claimed God's victories through an enormous faith that was extraordinary.

- This is faith in God in the face of extreme odds and trials. Those who have been wronged that face circumstances that make it seem as if their God has forsaken them trust and wait for the divine outcome. It's faith that waits on God. This faith is built by God Himself.

**Romans 1:17**

*17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."*

**Galatians 2:20**

*20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

**Gifts of Healing:** The Greek word is *iama*. It refers to cures or healing. This word is used in a class of words that refer to physical and spiritual healing. To treat, attend to, or care for the sick (also *therapeuo*, verb- therapy). During the apostolic times there were miracles and healings that happened supernaturally through the Apostles and God's chosen servants. Some today, would have us believe that they possess a modern day gift of healing. This is simply not true. The proof is in the prophet. The gift of healing today seems to only work on TV.

- We shall never deny the fact that God does heal and that He still heals today, but it is not through a TV evangelist that it happens. God has chosen to heal in many different ways today: e.g., Modern medicine and drugs. More people are helped on a larger scale today through medicine that any one person could achieve in a life time.
- Paul the Apostle had those with him that were healed. He also had many with him that were not. According to the faith healers of today, Paul was a failure and did not have enough

faith. (Philippians 2:27, Epaphroditus; 1 Timothy 5:23, Timothy; 2 Timothy 4:20, Trophimus). God healed one man. Paul tells Timothy to take a little wine for his tummy. One man is left behind in Miletus and not healed.

- Faith is not wishful thinking. Faith is trust in what God has said in His word, or promised in His word.
- Many of these gifts were meant for the apostolic era, in part, or in total.
- To sacrifice the blessings that God has given us in modern medicine, preventative care, health and education, and modern common sense, would set us back ten thousand years. It would be impossible for any one person to endure the physical anguish and mental trauma of having a true gift of healing (**Illustrate this**). Can you imagine what it would do to your life if you actually had a gift of healing in this magnitude? It would kill you.
- The Son of God Himself had to often get away from the crowds to build Himself back up physically and spiritually. Through time with His Father, rest, and prayer, He was able to endure the pain of being the healer of our bodies and souls. Not even Jesus healed everyone He met.
- For a “man” to claim that kind of ability is foreign to me. It borders on blasphemy. The hope of healing is used to manipulate and take advantage of the spiritually immature and emotional believers.
- Healing comes in many ways. Many people heal in spiritual ways and never get credit for it because no one jumped up out of a wheel chair and danced on the stage. Sad!

### **Matthew 4:23**

*23 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.*

### **John 7:22-24**

*23 Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath? 24 Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment."*

**Miraculous power:** The Greek text is *energema dunamis* (working power). The is one who has a supernatural power to work miracles. A worker of power or working power is the literal. This gift can simply refer to a person through which God does powerful work. The power of God rests upon them. This is also a gift that I believe was for the days of the Apostles. Not to say God cannot do miracles through people or do miraculous things today. I have seen it happen. But let's call it what it is; it's a miracle and it's not a gift. I know of no one in my life who does miracles on command.

- As I see this text, I think that God is still in the business of exhibiting His mighty power. I think "miracles" is an inferior translation here. As I see it, anyone that gets saved has seen the dynamic power of God displayed. This is just as true for the gift of healing as well. What's more important anyway, spiritual or physical healing?
- To not give God credit for miracles is dangerous.

### **Matthew 11:20-24**

*20 Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. 2 "Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that*

*were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the Day of Judgment than for you. 23 And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. 24 But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the Day of Judgment than for you."*

- To not believe God can do miracles is dangerous.

### **Matthew 13:58**

*58 And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.*

- To be deceived by miracles, however, is dangerous.

### **Matthew 24:23-25**

*23 At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. 24 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect — if that were possible. 25 See, I have told you ahead of time.*

### **2 Thess 2:9-12**

*9 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, 10 and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie 12 and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.*

NIV

**Prophecy:** The Greek is **propheta**. The OT word (**naba**) means to foretell or speak forth. The NT word means to tell forth. The OT prophets were endowed by God to predict the future. When an OT prophet got it wrong, he was in danger of losing his life. If this were the case today, maybe we would not have so many prophets.

- The NT word refers to speaking forth the truth of God's Word. We call it preaching or heralding the truth. God calls men into the ministry today to speak for the truth. Those with this gift know and understand the truth. Many of God's lay people also have this gift. A prophet sees things in black and white and must be well versed in the Word to be effective.
- We do not need those today to tell us what the future holds, we already know. Just read the book. The end has been written and we have no need for prophets to **foretell** the future. The future will unfold just as God says it will. We need honest prophets today to speak to those who do not obey the truth and that find themselves under judgment. The preaching of the gospel is what is needed.
- Prophecy is not the gift of preaching but it is impossible to preach without the message of prophecy, which is Jesus.
- Prophets hold a high regard for the Word and will defend it vehemently. Prophets are concerned for the name and reputation of God. If you offend the name or Word of God, you will have a fight on your hands. Prophets will speak up quickly, and they will speak up when others are afraid to take a stand.
- Prophets are used to carry the message of God to a dying world.
- Prophets are seen at times as uncaring and unkind. That will never keep them from delivering the Word from God unadulterated.

**1 Corinthians 14:3**

*“But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening (upbuilding), encouragement and comfort (consolation).”*

**Revelation 19:10**

*“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”*

**John 5:39**

*“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me...”*

**(Preaching should testify about Jesus)**

**1 Thessalonians 5:20**

*... do not treat prophecies with contempt.*

**Distinguishing between spirits:** The Greek says *diakrisis pneuma*. This is a judicial discernment between good and bad spirits. This gift allows one to make great judgments about what is spiritual and what is not. These people in the body are invaluable. They help others know when something is not good that Satan has disguised as being good. Their Spirit within them is always on alert for falsehood. I like to call this *discernment*.

- The bible is constantly under attack. We are led to believe that modern man has the answers to our problems. We are tricked by counterfeit teachers and slick philosophers all the time. Many young preachers (and old as well) have abandoned the true gospel and allowed false teaching into their churches in the name of tolerance and acceptance. **We have never been called to compromise truth for unity and peace.**
- New teachings come along every day. We need the old fashion gospel. I'd rather be biblical than modern any day.

- John Macarthur makes a great note. *The church in Paul's day did not have the scripture written down as we have it today. The people in the church with gifts of discernment were invaluable to keeping the truth pure. We still need them today because people still don't see the value in bible reading and the importance of doctrine.*
- ***Do you see why I say that spiritual gifts can be a combination of gifts or you may seek to understand them all? God would have us all to have discernment. God wants us all to prophesy and heal and help and share.***
- One with discernment would also need to have wisdom and knowledge to best display their gift.
- The gift of discernment allows a person to be able to supernaturally pick up on something that is not right or out of place when others do not recognize it. Discernment should be used in all areas of your life.

### **1 Corinthians 14:29**

*"Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should **weigh carefully** what is said..."*

### **Acts 16:16-18**

*16 Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. 17 This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved." 18 She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her. (Even the devil will praise God and try to benefit from the gospel)*

## Kinds of Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues:

The Greek is *glossa* and *hermeneia*. The first word is translated *language* and the second *interpretation*. I will deal with this in limited space here due to the fact that Chapter 14 deals with the subject in total. However, a few points to note are appropriate at this time.

- These two gifts were for the apostolic era and ceased shortly after Paul wrote this letter. Note what Paul says in chapter 13.

### 1 Corinthians 13:8-10

*8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.*

- Prophecy will cease and knowledge will pass away when the perfect comes. That being the completed canon, and ultimately, the return of Christ. Tongues are said, on the other hand, to simply be stilled. The verb is in the middle voice which means they will still themselves. ***Once the NT scriptures were completed there was no need for tongues any more. There was no need for foretellers as well.***
- When I say “**tongues**” I also want you to know that I mean **a known language (διαλεκτω)**. In Acts 2, we are introduced to tongues, and we are told they are *dialects*. It is a known language, but unknown to the speaker. This is not some gibberish that is made up of silly mechanical sounds that mean absolutely nothing.
- Remember that the miracle in Acts was in the **hearing** as well, if not totally.

### Acts 2:5-9

5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one **heard** them speaking in his own **language** (διαλεκτω). 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us **hears** them in his own native language?"

- The Greek for language here is **dialektos**. We get our word **dialect** from this word. Before the gift of tongues was perverted in the church in Corinth, it was exactly what we see in the book of Acts. Those in Corinth that saw the power of the Apostles, and the power of God, brought the counterfeit miracle into the church. They wanted to duplicate the power that God gave the apostles through the works of the Holy Spirit. Paul spends an entire chapter (14) showing them their error.
- Unfortunately, people today use chapter 14 to bring validity to their heresies and repeat this error. They claim that a mighty baptism of the Holy Spirit gives them this gibberish gift, when the greatest movement of the Holy Spirit was the Day of Pentecost and clearly the Greek words revealed to us in Acts 2 are a known dialect.
- If there were a genuine gift of tongues in Corinth, it had been soiled by paganism, and Paul was not pleased with the church.
- Chapter 14 tells us that if one speaks in a tongue that one should interpret, or no one is edified (14:13). The gifts are for whom? The body.
- In 14:10 we are told about the different languages or sounds that are in the world. None of them is without meaning. If it doesn't edify the body, it is not for worship, and it's not a spiritual gift. If it cannot be understood... what good is it?

- We are never to deny that there was a genuine gift in the NT called tongues (Languages) however badly used. It was permitted in the NT churches although it is not operative today unless it is by way of miracle. It will also not be an emotional, unintelligible outburst that does not edify the body.
- **The biblical view is that tongues is a gift, not an experience.**

**Illustration:** I have been in different denominations and even with our Baptist brethren who speak in some form of gibberish and call it a spiritual gift. I have never heard an interpreter once. I have never seen one speak in a tongue, stop, and wait for the interpretation, and then another speak. It is always chaos and confusion. These folks are in error.

- We will look at chapter 14 in detail later on.

**Apostles:** In verse 28 of chapter 12, some see Paul speaking of appointed offices. The gifts listed here are appointed offices of the church. I am inclined to see them as specific gifts needed for a certain time period. Here again, some of the gifts are repeated. It is true that the word “**appointed**” here means placed or set in a particular setting.

- The apostles are specifically spoken of as the 12 that walked with Jesus. To be a true apostle one would have to have seen the resurrected Christ. Appointed, chosen and have seen the risen Christ. An apostle was one who had a message and who was sent. Paul could claim to be an apostle because of his Damascus road experience. He saw the Risen Christ!
- God appointed apostles first and prophets second and teachers third in an attempt to protect the true message of

the gospel in the early church. The apostles actually verified what the prophets spoke and the teachers taught.

- The apostles received divine revelation from God. No man today need have this gift. **The scriptures are complete and we all can verify the prophetic word spoken through the teachers and pastor by simply reading it for ourselves.**
- Paul the apostle was scolding the members of the church in Corinth, as well as the prophets and teachers, for their unbiblical use of the gifts. Paul says in Ephesians 3:7 that he became a servant of the gospel by the grace of God. **We don't need any more prophets in the church, we need servants, bless God!**
- Today some pastors choose to be called apostles. It's not biblical; it's not practical; it's ignorance of the scriptures.

**Helps and Service:** In 12:28 Paul mentions a gift that is key to the proper function of the church. This is a gift that many do not see and that often manifests itself behind the scenes. In Romans 12:7 the gift of service is mentioned. These two gifts would be very similar, if not cousins. The picture that both these words display is quite beautiful.

**Helps: (*antilepsis*)** The Greek word means to take a load off another and place it upon oneself. This would be a person that goes around the kingdom and simply picks up the slack. They see something that needs doing, and they do it. They look for no thanks or glory, and they simply enjoy doing for others. This word is likened to what the deacons did in Acts 6. The difference, if there is any, in my mind, is in the occasion of the help. What I mean is this... a person with the gift of **helps** would “**help**” as he goes along in his day. His task of helping does not need a title or an appointed time to do his work. The one with the gift of helps does a plethora of different jobs that many may not see as ministry, yet it helps in great ways. (Osmer at Curtis)

**Service: (*diakonia*)** The Greek here relates to deacons and those who serve. It refers to giving relief to others who need help. Taking the burdens of others when you are not in their situation is quite a help and act of service to that person. Both these words refer to ministry. This is what we all do as ministers.

**Administration: (*kubernesis*)** This gift refers to one who can pilot a ship. One who steers or guides. It is not the gift of administration as we see it today. Most pastors have this gift as it is necessary to lead and have vision for the church's future. In the OT the Hebrew words refer to "counsels" or "wisdom" or wise men who "pilot." This is a steersman.

- MacArthur notes... *"The wisdom of those with the gift of administration lies in the ability to make wise decisions and to mobilize, motivate, and direct others toward an objective."*

**Acts 27:11**

*"But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the **pilot** and of the owner of the ship."*

**Leadership:** I want to deal with the gift of leadership in Romans 12:8 here because it closely relates to administration, in my opinion. The gift of leadership, as spoken of in Romans 12:8 is the word *proistemi*. It is translated as leadership, leads, ruleth, **the leader** (RSV). I have noted here that the RSV catches the nuance of this word. I think that the translation leadership is missing the mark a bit. To say that one is given the gift of leadership is not accurate. I am not sure I have ever seen the gift of leadership given to anyone. Leadership has to be developed. **The Greek actually is translated as "he who stands before or presides over."** I think this is more in line with one who has the ability to stand and lead. That is leadership in a sense, but it refers more to rank or position than how one leads. **This is not a style of leadership but the position of leadership.** In

other words, I believe that God, through His wisdom and sovereignty, knows that one has to lead or the ship goes in several different directions. The church needs a leader.

- In Roman 12:8 Paul adds to this gift the admonition to use it with zeal. Work hard and passionately. It means work with speed, diligence and eagerness.

**Encouragement or Exhortation:** This may be the most rewarding of all the gifts to have. These people have the gift of seeing the best in everything. These are the people that bring comfort with them.

- The Greek is (*parakaleo*). The word means to “call to one’s side.” This means to stand beside and comfort. You know this word very well because you have Him in your heart. This is the word for “**comforter**.” Jesus called Him the Holy Spirit. That’s what the Spirit does; He comforts, encourages and exhorts. It can mean to beseech or pray for. Encouragement people are fun to be around. They have a lot of friends and they make you feel good about yourself. This is the predominate gift that your pastor has. I think I also have the other gifts that help pastors in general but my main goal is to encourage the Saints.
- Jesus said he would go away but would send us another “**comforter**.” That’s the same word as we have here. Vincent tells us that the aim of the exhortation is at the heart and will.

**Acts 4:36-37**

*“Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of **Encouragement**), sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles’ feet.”*  
NIV

- The Grammar say that if a man has the gift of encouragement, then let him do it and keep on doing it (PAPTC).
- Think of the people that are in this very room that need a word to lift their spirits and comfort their hearts. Keep the gift of tongues and let me at the broken hearted.
- Remember that pastor thinks we should all learn the other gifts and grow in them. You may not feel you are able to encourage others, but you can. You may think your gift is teaching and that you are a prophet and that's it. Well, learn to be an exhorter and you will be a better teacher, a better leader, a better administrator.

**Giving:** The Greek is (*metadidomi*). This is sharing in simplicity and bountifully. This is not necessarily a rich person. A person that has the means to give money is always associated with this gift but it's not always the rich who have this gift. Some poor people have this gift as well. They also have the gift of faith and service too. As they give through faith, God takes care of them.

- Many times the rich do have this gift and they are very generous with their giving and sharing. I think most Christians want to be able to share with others. ***This gift is about obedience, not amount.***
- That's why I don't like tests to determine if you have this gift. Just answer the one question that's applicable... do you give generously? If not, you probably do not have this gift.
- However, we are all called to give. A spiritual gifts test will always ask you if you like to keep your giving quiet. Well, of course you do; nobody brags about how much they give. We end up with all of Christendom have the gift of giving because of a faulty question on a test. Most people are confused as to the context of giving passages. *"Don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing."* Some churches have come up with some of the craziest practices

due to poor exegesis of scripture, all in the name of “keep it quiet man!”

- You do not need the gift of giving to tithe. Do you see why I say we are all to grow in all the gifts? Growing in giving brings prosperity. Giving is also a command, not just a gift.
- I think the greatest sin of the American Christian is just this... they are cheap. Parsimonious. Extreme frugality. Not tithing is the greatest sin of the American church.
- The Greek says give with singleness. That means without strings attached. Give liberally and bountifully.

### **Ephesians 4:28**

*“He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, **that he may have something to share (metadidomi)** with those in need.”*

### **Luke 3:11**

*“John answered, the man with two tunics should **share with him** who has none, and the one who has food should do the same.”*

**Illustration:** John Milton said of John Selden the gifted intellect, scholar and genius of Jewish law, ancient law, and constitutions, that he was the chief of learned men in the land. Selden was reported to have 8000 volumes in his library. Upon his time of death he told colleges and friends that in all the volumes of his library that he had never come across a passage upon which he was able to rest his soul except this one...

### **Titus 2:11-14**

*11 For the **grace of God** that brings salvation has appeared to all men. 12 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14*

who **gave himself** for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, **eager to do what is good.**

NIV

*Give not only your money; give yourself like Jesus did.*

**Mercy:** The Greek is (**eleeo**). This is compassionate grace. Those who have been forgiven much love much. This word describes those who have the ability to show pity. The mercy people are those that see when others get hurt. They can literally hurt with people. They can actually feel what others are going through. We need these people in church to minister to those who are overlooked. Dr. Gray Allison used to say, **“mercy is God’s love in action.”** That’s a great description of this gift. Mercy people are those who show us God in action. They don’t just hurt for you, they do something to help you. Should all of us have mercy? Yes.

- In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus tells us that those who are merciful will be shown mercy.
- In Matthew 12:7 Jesus shows us just how close mercy and grace live together. He tells the Pharisees that He desires mercy and not sacrifice. Mercy is 1 Corinthians 13:1-8 fulfilled.

### **1 Cor 13:1-8**

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

NIV

If we live in love like we should, we will be a merciful person. It is good to be merciful so as to represent Jesus as He is. He showed us mercy, and we should do likewise.

- Mercy people have to be careful not to get in God's way, however. When God disciplines His children by taking them through financial troubles, or takes them to the woodshed, mercy people can get in the way by bailing people out of the trial God put them in. Emotionalism is the downfall of the mercy gift.
- You can see in the following scriptures that mercy is closely related to actions of kindness and grace done unto people that do not deserve the grace. Discernment is also key to being a good mercy person.

### **Matthew 18:21-35**

*"Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered*

*that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. "The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened. "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had **mercy** on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."*

### **Romans 9:15-16**

*"For he says to Moses,  
"I will have mercy on whom I have mercy,  
and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."  
It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on  
God's mercy"*

**Evangelism:** The Greek word is (**euaggelistes**). It relates to the one who preaches the gospel. The root word refers to the good news. That's the gospel itself. This is one who has the gift of sharing the gospel. Now, all of us have the command to share the gospel, but some are given a special gift of drawing the net.

- Some dispute that this is actually a spiritual gift. I think Paul makes it clear that it is. We are all to share, but some have been given the ability to bring men to the point of decision.
- I also think, that like the gift of leadership, that this gift refers more to the position instead of the gift. The by-product is the same. People get saved, but many times it is through the evangelists.
- Evangelists are often thought of as emotional with little substance. Many times they are seen as manipulating and that they would do anything to talk one into salvation. That is true in many cases but this is not the true picture of the biblical evangelists. I have heard both types and there is nothing like a true called man of God that is gifted in drawing the net. God often moves through these men to start revivals and to reach people that are hard hearted and tough to reach.
- Philip is the only one who has been called an evangelist in the bible. The evangelists were seen as men who were traveling missionaries. He was a church planter and minister that preached the message of salvation. That job description has changed a bit today but not much.
- In this next passage we see exactly what I have been saying about the gifts. Paul tells Timothy to do the work of an Evangelist. What if Timothy's gift was not evangelism? He would do it anyway. Grow in all the gifts just like the fruit of the Spirit.

### **2 Timothy 4:5**

*“But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, **do the work of an evangelist**, discharge all the duties of your ministry.”*

*NIV*

### Acts 21:8

*“Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven.”*

*NIV*

- The evangelist was one of the three itinerate preachers with the apostles and prophets being the other two. The pastors and teachers were tied to the local church. An apostle is a prophet and an evangelist, but the prophet and evangelist are not an apostle.

**Pastor and Teachers:** The Greek words here are ***poimen and didaskalos***. The first is one of the best words in the NT (poy-mane). It refers to a pastor-shepherd. It is one of the most descriptive words in the NT for pastors. Jesus spoke of Himself as a shepherd and relates that to His called men of God. To me, there is no greater word with which to address the man of God. Each time I am called pastor it reminds me of the special relationship I have with my sheep. There are several words in the NT for pastor (*presbuteros or elder, episkopos or overseer and poimen or shepherd-pastor*) but none as sweet as this one-***poimen***.

- The shepherd is one who tends the flock. Matthew 9:7 expresses Jesus’ thoughts on ***poimens***. He uses this word for pastor there:

### Matthew 9:36-38

*“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a **shepherd**.*

*Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”*

### 1 Peter 5:1-4

*“To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be **shepherds** of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the **Chief Shepherd** appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”*

*NIV*

- The first word for shepherd in 1 Peter is translated “**feed**” in many translations and that is correct. Its root is the word for pastor, but in 1 Peter it refers to what the shepherd does. This is the truth of scripture... it is biblical that the shepherd is to feed the sheep?
- The second word is teacher (master, doctor). This word refers to one of the many jobs that a pastor has. Why did Paul only list this one aspect of the pastor’s job? Because it is his main job. Listen very carefully... especially if you have a call to ministry. Your job is to be able to care for the flock and teach them the word. To say a called man of God is a good preacher and not a good pastor contradicts the Word. Men of God are to be good preachers and good pastors. It is right here in the Word. We just read it.
- Now, preachers don’t come this way. They must learn it. If you get a preacher/pastor that has been gifted by God to be naturally good at both... blessed are you. Most pastors work on this their entire life. Many pastors could help themselves much by learning to be kind, generous, patient, merciful, truthful, and interested in their sheep. Then work and read to be the best preacher you can be. Learn to preach in the

power of the Holy Spirit. Spend time in preparation and study. Trust in sacred preparation. Learn to pray. Most pastors I know never prepare enough to preach... and it shows. Sacred preparation is the key to efficacious preaching. The quintessential characteristic of a great preacher is sacred preparation.

- The pastor guides, teaches, feeds, cares for, disciplines, rebukes, advises, watches over, protects, heals, leads, and learns his sheep. What a gift, what a calling, what a joy.

**Hospitality:** The Greek word is *(philo-xenos- love for strangers)*. This is one who is fond of guest. There are those who love to entertain and enjoy personal acts of fellowship with others. This gift is useful in small groups and with the church as a whole. The word has more references to the *kindness of strangers* than it does to those we know, but both are correct. Our English word, you may be more familiar with, is xenophobic, which is the opposite of this word in our text, referring to the fear of strangers (foreigners). The idea here is putting up guests from out of town for a short period of time. The love of (philo) strangers.

#### **Hebrews 13:2**

*“Do not forget to **entertain strangers**, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.”*

*NIV*

- The hospitality gifts are invaluable to the fellowship of the church. These members are true servants in the manner of service and serving.

**Celibacy:** In 1 Corinthians 7:7 Paul mentions this in passing in the context of gifts. Paul refers to the marriage relationship and the couple not being separate sexually for long periods of time, and only for short periods due to prayer and fasting. Then Paul

says that not all men are as he. He is referring more to his singleness than his sexuality, but it is obvious that if one is single, and saved, that celibacy is the proper and godly lifestyle to maintain.

- Paul is aware that God does not give this gift to many, and that when He does, He gives the grace to go with it. Many try to separate themselves from marriage and live for the kingdom only to be frustrated and experience failure. Let each man have his own wife if necessary. It is better to marry than to burn.

### **Closing for this section:**

I want to wrap up this section with a few final thoughts.

- I think that 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 is the key to this discussion and interpretation. From verse 4-7 Paul speaks of how we are to manifest the Spirit, not the gift. He mentions the Trinity and how that is the motivation behind the gifts. The Holy Spirit is the motivation behind your gift. Your service is the manifestation of that gift.
- Your gift is to be used in the body.
- Your gift, or combination of gifts, is a unique grace gift from God to you, specifically designed for you to be able to do supernatural work in the Kingdom of God.
- Learn all the gifts and grow in all the spiritual areas you can. Peter tells us to grow in *grace* and the *knowledge* of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever (2 Peter 3:18). It is not unbiblical to have a measure of many gifts and to learn and grow in all of the gifts. The gifts are not bad virtues you know.
- All things come from the Spirit, and just as we are to grow in the fruit of the Spirit, we are to grow in the knowledge and grace of all the gifts.

- Serve out of passion and love for Jesus as we are told to do in 1 Corinthians 13 and you can't go wrong.

### **Recap:**

- I. **The Introduction and Foundation:** (Verse 1-3). Someone had cursed Jesus in the service. Mystery religions and Babylonian religions were in the church.
- II. **The Explanation:** (4-7) Different gifts same Spirit, different service same Lord, different workings same God. The manifestation of the Spirit, or Trinity, is what's most important, not the gift.
- III. **The Manifestation:** (8-11, 27-29; Romans 12 and Ephesians 4) Gifts listed and explained.
- IV. **The Unification:** (12-26) One body with many parts.

### **IV: The Unification of the Body: 12-26**

**Biblical Unity Through Diversity 12-20. This is from where we get the word university- Universal and Diversity. One world view from a diversity of thoughts.**

**Verse 12:** Paul uses the illustration of the human body to describe the body of Christ. Many parts make up one useful body. The biblical view is unity with diversity. Paul says that the human body works just like the spiritual body of Christ. We are one body and Christ is the head of the body (Church).

**Verse 13:** This verse destroys about half of Charismatic theology. All the gifts of the Spirit come from the same place and all Christians get the same Spirit. We were all baptized **with**, or **in** the one Spirit. No special baptism for special people, or special gifts for the elite. Literally, we drank from the same Spirit. If one claims a special baptism, the scripture says they are lying. Jews and Gentiles all receive the same Holy Spirit. The Baptism of the Spirit comes from one place and at salvation. Period.

- There are no special gifts or blessings for those who beg, or for those who are more righteous, or for those who are connected to some secret, mysterious, spiritual alley way to God. No second blessings. No special baptisms. No super gifts for the elite. At salvation, you are given the greatest gifts at your most sinful and immature time of your walk with Christ.
- He is one and the same Spirit. One Faith, one Lord, One baptism.

### **Eph 4:4-5**

4 There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— 5 **one** Lord, **one** faith, **one** baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

NIV

- “I go away but I will send you several comforters.” **No, “another comforter.”**
- Slaves and kings have equal access to the God of heaven... through the Holy Spirit.
- To say there is another Spirit or another form of a Spirit is congruent to saying there are two Gods.
- There is only one body and that is the body of Christ. Don’t worry if you are not a Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, or SDA; you better make sure you are in the body of Christ.
- Greeks, Jews, slaves, and free men must all drink from that Rock and that Rock is Christ.

**Verse 14:** The body has many parts. I, for one, am glad we are not all the same.

**Verse 15:** We are here introduced to an unhappy member of the body. A foot now says that he is not happy and wants to be a hand. We have so many parts that try to be something they are

not. Many parts try to not be connected; but it is useless... a Christian is a member of the body of Christ.

**Verse 16:** Now the ear and the eye have a problem.

**Verse 17:** If the body were one part, it would be a silly looking mess. A body void of parts is also funny looking. When a deer loses one part of his body, like his sight, he runs through the woods at full speed from fear and kills himself. When lights blind the deer he is in danger.

- The NT church looks strange because it looks like this blind deer at times. We have parts missing. We have hands, feet and legs missing. The tongue is never missing, it seems.
- We also have parts in the wrong place. If Paul is serious, and he is, then the NT church must look like a freak to God.

**Verses 18-21:** God has purposed, conceived, or appointed the parts to be in certain places. God designed it this way. He wanted different parts to serve together with one purpose. The plan was to be unification.

- Question: Is a body that is not unified an ineffective body? Divided bodies are in spiritual deformity.
- Can you pick out these churches?
- Are the opinions of a few members more important than unity?
- Is the vision of the church more important than unity?
- Is the music more important than unity?
- Is the mission more important than unity?
- Is personal preference more important than unity?

Unity is the key to successful church growth. Now that's a church growth philosophy you may not be hearing about today. Are feet more important than hands? Is your heart better than your lungs?

## Unity Through Equality 21-26

**Verse 21:** We need each other. Period! We need you here; you need to be here. ***A Christian has no right to be a member of the body of Christ and not participate.*** Some Christians are saying with their absence that the body does not need them. **If you don't participate, you end up dying. Then we have to amputate! Are you abusing the body?**

**Verse 22:** The parts that seem to be weak are actually indispensable. The parts that seem to be or appear to be feeble, impotent, or sick are the parts that are ***necessary***. Some parts that are strong actually act like they are weak and sick. God knows the truth.

### What's the smallest muscle in the human body?

The stapedius, in your middle ear, measures about 1mm in size (or 1/26 of an inch). Connected to the stapes bone, it contracts to pull back the stapes and help protect your inner ear from loud noises. The stapedius also contracts to keep your own voice from sounding too loud in your head

- We all have eye lids. When was the last time you thought about your eye lids? Most likely never. How about your hemoglobin, or leucocytes, or how about your taste buds. All small parts of the body. None of these are seen very often, but they are very important.

Many say they don't need to come to church. What about the people that need you? I bet they need you, and you need them, even though you won't admit it.

**Verse 23:** If you don't mind, I really don't care to see your spleen or liver, but you might well better treat them both with honor. The parts that are not visible, or that are less honorable, are treated with respect for importance sake.

- There are members of the body that seem to be unpresentable, but we treat them with respect and protect them. **Likewise, these same members of the body need protection and respect.**

**Verse 24:** The opposite is also true. The outward parts are usually self-sustainable. God gives greater honor to the parts that lack honor. The access and the potential to serve are available to all.

**Verse 25:** Read it and tell me what is most important in the body? Unity. Equality. Each member deserves the same concern.

**Verse 26:** This verse changes all the rules. We are not like a business or any other organization. If one part of the body suffers it all suffers. If one part is honored all parts get honored. **Each member has the ability to honor and grow the body; likewise, each member can dishonor and harm the body. As a unit, we are to reach the world with the gospel.**

### **John 4:34-38**

35 Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. 36 Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. 37 Thus the saying 'One sows and another

reaps' is true. 38 I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

NIV

### ***My House is Full***

*There is peace and contentment in my Father's house today,  
Lots of food on His table and no one turned away.  
There is singing and laughter as the hours pass by,  
But a hush calms the singing as the Father sadly cries,*

*My house is full, but my field is empty,  
Who will go and work for Me today.  
It seems my children want to stay around  
my table,  
But no one wants to work my fields,  
No one wants to work my fields.*

*Push away from the table.  
Look out through the windowpane,  
Just beyond the house of plenty  
Lies a field of golden grain.  
And it's ripe unto harvest,  
But the reapers, where are they?  
In the house,  
Oh, can't the children hear  
the Father sadly say,*

*My house is full, but my field is empty,  
Who will go and work for Me today.  
It seems my children want to stay around my table,  
But no one wants to work my fields,  
No one wants to work my fields.*

*The song above "My House is Full, But My Field is Empty" was written by Lanny Wolfe.*

- *We are in such bad shape in the church today that we can't even get them into the house, and at the table, much less the fields. Are you a missing part of the body?*

### ***"The Ways of Love"*** ***1 Corinthians 13***

***Introduction:*** *When I think of great sacrifice the first thing that comes to mind is the sacrifice of Christ. The second will always be the sacrifice of my mother. My father was unloving and unkind and unfaithful. Yet my mom stayed with my father to make sure her children did not suffer. She made so many sacrifices for us. The essence of my mother has always been love. A mother would do anything for her children. When I think of my mom, love is the essence of all that she has given and what makes up her character. Paul the apostle tells us of the biblical kind of love that God has, that our moms have, and that we should have.*

- *The greatest thing a mother can pass along is her love and her faith.*

#### **Verses 1-3:**

- *The first word in the original language is *though, if, or whether*. It is a coordinating conjunction that carries a subjunctive sense with it. Paul is not saying that he speaks with the language of angels. He simply uses that as an illustration.*

- “*Even If I speak*” in foreign languages in which men and angels speak, and have not love, I am nothing but noise. Love is supreme.
- If you preach with a prophetic gift and understand the world’s mysteries and spiritual blessings, and have not love, you are just noise.
- If you do all the works of missions, and benevolence, and the kingdom, but have not love, you are just noise. If you even give your own body as a sacrifice, you are nothing without love.
- *Paul makes it clear that all the gifts given by the Spirit are motivated and manifested through love. The context of service is always through love. Chapter 13 is right in the middle of the two most controversial chapters in the bible. Tongues are not the issue. Love is.*
- After all, the scripture says, “God is love.” Love is supreme.

### **What love is?**

1. **Biblical love is not feelings.** Feelings will always change; love is commitment. Correct behavior leads to correct emotions. Without love you can do nothing. Paul makes it clear that if we do not have love our lives are worthless. If we speak in the language of angels or speak great prophecies and have great wisdom and have no love, we are just noise. If you have the greatest faith in the world and give your own body to be burned and have not love, you are just noise and gain nothing. You can even give all your possessions away to the poor, but if you do not have love, you are found lacking. This is *αγαπη* love. It is unconditional.
2. **Real love is patient.** The word means patience with people and with circumstances. Endurance is the meaning. The idea is

that you can be wronged again and again and not retaliate. It means that you are long-tempered; you demonstrate patience in handling problems at a later time. You do not fly off the handle. This is being able to hold back.

- You have the right to avenge, but you don't.
- An active verb

3. **Love is kind.** Kindness says that you will give anything to the person that offends. Whereas patience takes – kindness gives. Kindness is a positive reaction. Patience keeps us from reacting negatively and kindness helps us react positively. To show one's self useful. That means it refers to doing something good.

### **What love is not:**

1. **Love is not jealous.** Shakespeare said that jealousy is the green sickness. It is rottenness to the bones. Jealousy wants what others have. Many times we want what the world has. We want something that does not even exist. Solomon tells us that jealousy is as cruel/unyielding as the grave... Song of Songs 8:6. Proverbs 3:31 tell us not to envy a violent man or choose any of his ways. Psalm 73:3 and 37:1 make it clear that envy can be a problem in the lives of Christians. We must remember that the world will pay for ungodly living in due time. We must not envy their prosperity. Instant gratification should not be a part of a Christian's life. Someone has said that the root word of jealousy means *to burn*.

### **Psalm 73:3-11**

*3 For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. 4 They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. 5 They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills. 6 Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence.*

*7 From their callous hearts comes iniquity; the evil conceits of their minds know no limits. 8 They scoff, and speak with malice;*

*in their arrogance they threaten oppression. 9 Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth. 10 Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance. 11 They say, "How can God know? Does the Most High have knowledge?" 16 When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me 17 till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.*

NIV

2. **Love is not boastful...** not someone who brags. This is verbalization of pride or conceit. The idea is that of someone who is just plain “showing off.” Someone who sings his or her own praises. The word used for boast or brag can also be “windbag” (BAGD 653). Love is not a windbag. Boasting is always done to make you look better than someone else. That is not God’s way. Bragging is a cover for weakness or insecurity. One spouse can use bragging to put the other spouse down. Remember Proverbs 16:18... “Pride comes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.” Seeing one’s self in the presence of Jesus will keep you humble.

### **Illustration**

When a Jewish Rabbi walked abroad his students would carry his coat, his books and his inkhorn for him. Yet, they would never unloose his sandals. This job was left for the slaves. A disciple would tend to his teacher but was considered a disciple not a slave. John, in Mark 1:7 says that he is lower than a slave because he is not worthy to even do a slaves job by untying Jesus’ sandals. That’s the picture of this word.

3. **Love is not conceited or arrogant.** This is similar to boasting but with an attitude. Philippians 2:2 tells us not to do anything out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. I really like the original language in this passage. Vain conceit means that you

are arrogant and conceited and don't have a reason to be. Which is usually the case.

- Never get your self-esteem from your success. Get your self-esteem from your calling.

### **Romans 12:3**

*3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.*

*NIV*

4. **Love is not rude.** Do not act in an unbecoming manner. This is a person that can't control his behavior with others in mind. When someone is rude, he is not caring for those around him.

William Barclay says that love should not behave **“gracelessly.”** We do not have the right to treat those around us or those close to us meanly or rudely.

- **Jerry Vines**, *“A Christian never has the luxury of being unkind.”*

### **Illustration**

A young boy asked his mother if she would give him a dollar if he were a good boy. She looked at him and said, “Son, why can't you be good for nothing like your father.”

5. **Love is not selfish or self-seeking.** Philippians 2:4 says that we are to not only look to our own interests but to look at the interests of others. Romans 15:2-3 says that we should please others because Christ came to please others, not Himself. Marital problems will occur when one spouse only wants to please himself or herself. This will also happen in the body of Christ.

### Illustration

Something that I remember as a small boy was when my mother's car broke down on the way to drop me off at the school for a football game. I missed the Gray-Y bus and mama took her lunch money and put me in a cab and sent me to the field in Martinez so I could play. She doesn't even remember it but I will never forget it.

6. **Love is not easily angered.** You are not provoked too easily. When people fly off the handle, the whole family will suffer.
- Proverbs 12:18... “Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”
  - Proverbs 13:3... “He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.”
  - Proverbs 14: 17... “A quick tempered man does foolish things, and a crafty man is hated.”
  - Proverbs 14:29-30... “A patient man has great understanding, but a quick- tempered man displays folly. A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.” (Note also Prov. 15:4, 18; 16:18, 32; 17:9, 14; 18:13; 19:11, 19).
  - A church member at war with himself will be at war with everybody in the body.
  - Anger damages body, soul and spirit.
7. **Love does not keep a record of wrongs.** Love does not keep score. When you have a disagreement with your spouse or brother in Christ, keep the argument to the topic at hand. If you have to go back in time to get ammunition for your present argument, you most likely don't have an argument. Discuss one subject at a time. For personal or home life... never discuss a problem before dinner. Never discuss a problem in the bedroom or the kitchen. The two places in the house where you

have your most intimate moments should not be battlegrounds. Learn to let things go.

8. **Love does not rejoice in evil or unrighteousness.** Never rejoice in the failure of your mate, friends, and God forbid, your children. If putting your mate down makes you feel better, then you have some serious issues to deal with. Your job is to build your mate up, never tear your mate down. This applies also in God's house. We are not here to tear down.
- In many cases, the best way to fix your mate is to fix yourself. Your mate was created in the image of God and should be treated that way. Stop nagging your mate and playing the faultfinding game.
  - If you look at your lives from God's point of view, you will have enough to work on for your own life.
  - Galatians 6:1-5 says we are to carry each other's burdens and that we are to watch out for being tempted ourselves. Do not compare yourself with other people. Don't compare your spouse or children to other's spouses and children.

### **What Love Does:**

1. **Love rejoices in the truth.** To seek out the truth is a sign of maturity. The truth may reveal that "I" am wrong. To rejoice in the truth means that I put away my biases and personal preferences to seek the truth. You should rejoice when good things happen to others. Ephesians 4:15 says that we should speak the truth in love.
- Passing along the truth is a great way to see your children succeed.

### **Psalm 33:4**

*4 For the word of the LORD is right,  
And all His work is done in truth.*

NKJV

**Psalm 100:5**

*5 For the LORD is good;  
His mercy is everlasting,  
And His truth endures to all generations.*

NKJV

**Psalm 119:142**

*142 Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,  
And your law is truth.*

NKJV

**John 16:13-14**

*13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.*

NKJV

**John 18:37**

*37 Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, **that I should bear witness to the truth.** Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."*

NKJV

**2. Love bears all things or covers all things.** The NIV says "protects." This is a great way to win favor with your family. The word "**bear**" is related to the word roof. It literally means to cover. Cover all the ugly and unpolished places that your family or body of Christ has. Remember that God is covering your ugly places with the blood of Christ so do likewise. **Put up with others the way God puts up with you.**

3. **Love always trusts.** If one partner does not trust the other then there will always be dominance in the relationship. One person will always try to control the other. This is sin! Think the best of your spouse and children until you know differently. **You can never have what you try to dominate.** The main ingredient in love is trust. Without trust there is no relationship or friendship. Trust is faith. Faith is the key to a healthy relationship with God.
4. **Love always hopes.** As long as God is God, there is hope in a family. If God's love is operative then there is hope. Do not take failure as the last option for your relationships or a child. Proverbs 13:12 says that when hope is delayed the heart grows sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life. The struggling church can also rebound if all parties involved will come to the table of compromise. However, listen to me well, continual sin and rebellion will destroy relations beyond recovery. That's just life. Love covers a multitude of sin but there will always be relationships we lose because of sin and selfishness.
- The NT word for hope leaves no room for wishing. Hope, in the bible, means confident expectation based on what God says.
  - No matter how much darkness there is in the world it is not enough to put out one small candle.
5. **Love endures all things.** Love never quits. Commitment is lacking today in our world. We must learn to make our relationships work. We do not need to learn to just stick it out, but learn to make it work. If there is no commitment to God or the church then the relationship is on its own. Jesus died for the church so who are we to criticize the church? Jesus never quite on the bride. Hear me well, love will endure, but there is always a breaking point for humans. If a person always receives love and never gives love, they will end up alone. One sided relationships don't last.

6. **Love never fails.** Love never runs out. If Jesus lives in you, you never run out of love. 1 John 4:16 says that, “We know and rely on the love of God. God is Love.” The Bible says, “Love Never Fails.” The Bible does not lie so the truth is that our relationships can succeed because love never fails. However, there has to be mutual reciprocity in relationships for success.

## **“The Truth about Tongues”**

### **Chapter 14**

**Introduction:** Personal thoughts on this chapter.

Has there ever been any topic that has been debated, argued, or made a battle ground, more than the issue of tongues?

There are several issues in the NT that have been so hotly debated that they have split, destroyed, or seriously disrupted churches. Calvinism, methods of church growth, church polity, styles of music and tongues are several of these issues. None has done more damage, I think, than the charismatic movement and tongues.

God never intended it to be so? The Corinthian church was in confusion due to this issue and many churches are today as well.

It is a topic that even the secular media and worldly people have picked up on and who have become interested in the debate.

It has, in many circles, become a litmus test of spirituality, as well as, a laboratory for theological debate on scriptural doctrines of the Holy Spirit.

This is sad because Paul tells us to live together in unity. The gifts were given for the building of the body of Christ, not the destruction of it.

My point in this exegesis is to see what the Word says about tongues and to rightly divide the word of truth. I have friends that are tongue speakers and we still get along. We should as well, even if we disagree. I can debate with anybody that does not get belligerent. We can disagree and still have fellowship, but please listen to the truth.

### **Common Comments I Get:**

- Brother Jerry, you are missing something. You need the baptism of the Holy Spirit and need to speak in tongues. I ask them plainly... *“When is the last time you personally led a soul to Christ?”* If you are not witnessing to the lost and bringing people to Christ, you can keep your second baptism and tongues because I’m beating your pants off in kingdom building with what I have. I can’t think of anything that’s better than having the Son of God in my heart.
- Bro. Jerry you need a second baptism. That’s not what the scripture says. Just let the Word speak.

### **Colossians 2:9-10**

*9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.*

*NIV*

***Greek: fullness- pleroo and pleroma.*** Complete. Perfect. Completely filled. Finished.

What else do I need? You got something better than the Trinity.

- Brother Jerry, you need an experience. Tongues is a gift, not an experience. Tongues is like all the other gifts. That gift was not more special than the others. The Holy Spirit is likewise a gift. It is not a toy to be tossed around and given

away by men. The Father gives the Holy Spirit at the New Birth with the gifts of the Spirit.

**Rom 5:5**

5 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.  
NIV

**1 Cor 6:19**

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?  
NIV

**Eph 1:13-14**

13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of his glory.  
NIV

**1 Thess 1:4-7**

4 For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5 because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. 6 You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.  
NIV

**1 Thess 4:8**

8 Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.  
NIV

**2 Tim 1:14**

14 Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you — guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

NIV

**Titus 3:5-7**

5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

NIV

**Heb 2:4**

4 God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

NIV

- With tongues, Bro. Jerry, you can live a holier life. Excuse me, but I see nothing in the lives of tongue speakers and charismatics that shows me they are any more spiritual than anybody else. As a matter of fact they are usually more emotion and less theological, which makes them susceptible to sins of the flesh and false doctrines.

May I remind you that the Word has no record of The Son of God speaking in tongues? He was quite Holy enough.

In my opinion, tongues and the whole charismatic movement (and their doctrines) are an attempt to avoid the old rugged cross. You can't grow without trials in your life. Pain is God's method of growing us spiritually. Hard times make us grow. Tongues is not a supernatural way to bypass this process. There is no esoteric spiritual maturity given by God to the super elite. Not happening.

- Tongues can take a church to new heights of revival. I personally have never seen the charismatic movement do anything to established churches, usually they fade away or split. Churches that are a part of this movement and denominations that promote tongues and emotionalism have no problem, but when the DNA of a church is disrupted it causes nothing but trouble. Tongues, Calvinism and music will never change the DNA of a church. I was called to preach the gospel, not doctrines that support men's fancies.

### **Historical Information:**

- The Greek word for "tongue" is *glossa*. It is a noun. To speak is *lalein*. To speak in tongues is *glossolalia*, which term does not exist in scripture. Neither does the word "*unknown*." It is in italics in the KJV because it is added to the text.
- From early in the NT times, tongues was spoken, but shortly after the canon of scripture closed, tongues ceased. Only occasionally was it to surface, and only with minority groups. The theological subject refers to cessationism vs. continuationism. In other words, did certain gifts cease or continue with the completion of the canon, e.g. prophecy, tongues, words of knowledge? (1 Corinthians 13:8)
- 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 tells us this. It is clearly, plainly, and inspirationally written for all eternity by Paul to explain the importance of the canon of scripture being closed to protect us from the damnable heresies that have arisen in spite of God's attempts to explain the process to us.

### 1 Corinthians 13:8-13

8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be **done away**; if there are tongues, they **will cease**; if there is knowledge, it will be **done away**. 9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known. 13 But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

NASB

- Why did tongues cease. Notice in verse 8 that prophecy and knowledge will be done away with when the perfect comes. Tongues will cease. We still have prophecy and knowledge with us today because the perfect has not come yet... that being Jesus Christ at His return. **Yes, the scripture is closed and that has caused the gifts to change from a foretelling to a forth telling**, but they are at least still present in some form. Grammatically speaking, tongues is different. The middle voice has been used to show that tongues would cease on their own. Like a battery that runs out of fuel or energy they will cease. When? When there would be no more need for them as a sign gift to fulfill prophecy.

### Isaiah 28:11-12

11 Indeed, He will speak to this people  
Through stammering lips and a foreign tongue,  
12 He who said to them, "Here is rest, give rest to the weary,"  
And, "Here is repose," but they would not listen.

NASB

1. Tongues was a sign gift used as judgment on Israel.

2. Tongues was a sign to unbelievers. Not to the church (1 Corinthians 14:22).

**1 Cor 14:22**

22 Tongues, then, are a sign, **not** for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is for believers, not for unbelievers.

NIV

3. Tongues became an inferior means of spreading the gospel when people could be indwelt with the Holy Spirit and translate the scripture into their own language.
  - Therefore, tongues faded from history as the scriptures were copied and the gospel was spread through modern and efficient means. Even though early on, the means was primitive.

### **How did Tongues reappear?**

Tongues resurfaced again between 1955 and 1960 through several denominations.

The denominations consist of:

- Traditional Pentecostalism: Assembly of God, Church of God, The Church of God in Christ (black), The Pentecostal Church of God in America, and The United Pentecostal Church (Dr. Jimmy Millikin *Testing Tongues by the Word*).
- Neo-Pentecostalism: Mainline denominations... from 1955 to today all denominations have had tongue speakers and new churches and denominations have come from the movement. The Charismatic movement is the most dangerous movement due to its lack of solid theology.
- The Vineyard movement and Third wave.
- Today it's "GTV," or God TV, and many, if not most, TV evangelist and programs that have to keep up with the

healing ministries of the past. If you don't offer miracles and supernatural experiences you can't keep up financially. Even Pat Robertson has fallen into this trap to pay the bills. "Word Faith Ministries and PTL along with prosperity TV ministers have basically disregarded the scripture for financial gain and fame.

### **Origin of Modern Tongues Movement:**

Although tongues as a movement became popular in the mid to late fifties, it is important to note one historic event that, although it did not give rise to the modern tongues movement, did however give rise to the spread of Pentecostalism.

The **Azusa Street Revival** was an historic Pentecostal revival meeting that took place in Los Angeles, California, and was led by William J. Seymour, an African American preacher. It began with a meeting on April 14, 1906, and continued until roughly 1915. The revival was characterized by *ecstatic spiritual experiences accompanied by speaking in tongues, dramatic worship services, and inter-racial mingling*. The participants received criticism from secular media and Christian theologians for behaviors considered to be outrageous and unorthodox, especially for that time. Today, the revival is considered by historians to be the primary catalyst for the spread of Pentecostalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Origin** – (Comments from Dr. Jimmy Millikin, Testing Tongues By The Word). Just when tongues began to appear among non-Pentecostal churches in any significant number is not clear. The breakthrough seems to have come sometime between the years 1955 and 1960. It was brought about to a great extent through an organization called the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, International. This organization was begun in 1953 by Demos Shakarian, a wealthy Pentecostal businessman from California. It

has an official publication called *Voice*, which has a circulation of 600,000, and is printed in seven languages.

One of the expressed purposes of the FGBMFI is to bridge the gap that has kept the Pentecostal message from the traditional churches. In reporting on the success of their objective, Shakarian said recently at the nineteenth annual world convention of the FGBMFI that “God is using the fellowship to bring the Holy Spirit movement and the gifts **back** to the people.”

The Fellowship has an aggressive, well-organized, sophisticated, and – one might say – rather subtle, strategy for accomplishing their goal. First, they sponsor monthly banquets in hotels and restaurants in various cities. Guests from the mainline churches are invited to these breakfasts and luncheons. At these meals featured speakers are usually key Pentecostal leaders along with ministers and laymen from the traditional churches who have had the “tongues experience.” They tell of their tongues experience and how it changed their lives. Many of the guests from the non-Pentecostal churches accept the Pentecostal message and speak in tongues. They in turn return to their respective churches and testify to their new experience, oftentimes winning more new converts.

**Thus, the outbreak of tongues-speaking can hardly be said to have resulted from a spontaneous outburst. It began from a determined effort of Pentecostals to take their message and experience to the other churches. And they have used skillful public relations techniques to accomplish their goal.**

Through methods such as those employed by the FGBMFI the tongues movement within the non-Pentecostal churches began rather quietly and unnoticed. It gained national attention, however, on Sunday, April 3, 1960. It was on this date that

Dennis J. Bennett, rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Van Nuys, California told his congregation of his Pentecostal experience. When he was asked to resign, the event gained national publicity. New Pentecostalism as a distinct movement seems to have started with this event.

### **Who are they?**

It has been speculated that tongue speakers and Charismatics are uneducated southerners from the Bible belt. That may have been true at one time but is not true anymore. Charismatics are people from all walks of life and reflect lifestyles as doctors, lawyers and educators, as well as, soccer moms and pastors. Many tongue speakers are great influencers and cultured people.

### **The Claims of tongues speakers: Dr. Millikin's comments (emphasis mine)**

*It is difficult to pin down the theology and claims of tongue speakers (and charismatics) due to the fact that there is a wide variety of people, denominations and geographic locations involved. Yet there are a few distinctions in most groups. The following usually exists within all groups with only a few exceptions.*

1. There is an experience called the "baptism with the Holy Spirit" which comes after conversion. This Spirit-baptism bestows power for life and service, and every believer should earnestly seek it.

*~The scriptures teach many fillings but only one baptism (Ephesians 5:18). The scripture says only one faith, one Lord and one baptism.*

2. The one initial outward sign or evidence that a person has received the Spirit-baptism is speaking with other tongues.

*~The most powerful and dynamic Christians of the past, which we claim as our forefathers of the faith, have never taught in their Christian material, sermons or personal lives and experience such as the baptism of the Spirit. The scripture teaches that all we receive from God comes at salvation and is given by grace. Scripture never anywhere teaches that we are to seek a second baptism.*

3. The modern manifestation of tongues is identical with the biblical gift. It is not mere gibberish or ecstatic babbling. It consists of real languages. They may be known human languages or unknown heavenly languages.

*~Several problems occur here. The **first** is that if the language is labeled as a real human language then there must be a people somewhere on the planet that speaks that language or we will never be able to understand its grammar, syntax, or vocabulary. There has to be an absolute from which we gage the language. The **second** would be that it is obvious that many groups today do not hold to this view. Many groups today claim divine revelation and new revelation that no one but the person speaking the language can adequately understand. That's nice isn't it? You get to write your own new bible and theology. No body is allowed to challenge it. **Third**, the bible never teaches that men can speak a heavenly language. In 1 Corinthians 13:1 Paul refers to a heavenly language in what may be called a subjunctive question. **"If,"** I speak in the tongues of men and angels, he says. The Greek is a condition conjunction, "though" or "if." Paul never says he actually could speak in a heavenly language or commands us to do the same. **Forth**, if you speak in a*

*language of which you have no understanding you might just do what one member of the Corinthians church did... curse the name of Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:3).*

4. Though the gift of tongues may be used to benefit the congregation, its primary purpose is to give the individual speaker some tangible evidence that he is Spirit filled, and to build him up in his Christian life. It is very common, for example, to hear tongue-speakers refer to tongues as a prayer language.

*~I am not surprised that people still believe this after I show them that the word of God Himself says that is incorrect. After all they don't even believe what they see in black and white (1 Corinthians 12:7). The gifts are received by grace. You and I do not have enough faith to get what God has for us. The Holy Spirit and the gifts that come with Him are given by grace not as evidence that I have gotten some special favor from God. No sign shall be given you except the sign of Jonah.*

In short, modern tongue-speakers claim that their tongues experience is a genuine work of God and is an exceedingly precious and valuable experience. Many claim that their lives have been literally changed after the experience. Most say that it deepens their awareness of the love of God, and gives them a power for life and service they never had before. But Peter says...

### **2 Peter 1:3-4**

*3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may*

*participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

*NIV*

*As Peter tells us about the power that rests in the knowledge of God, I suppose that my feelings are this... if the knowledge of Jesus allows me to participate in the divine nature and the promises of God, allows me to escape from the corruption of the evil age, I will say that's enough. If you can't live effectively for Christ with that, there's not much hope for you anyway.*

### **The Text and Outline:**

- I. The **Position** of Tongues in the Church: Verses 1-19
- II. The **Purpose** of Tongues in the Church: Verses 20-25
- III. The **Procedure** of Tongues in the Church: Verses 26-40

#### **I. The Position of Tongues in the Church: 1-19**

- The issue of interest in chapter 14 is this... edification, strengthening, and/or building up. Some 7 times Paul uses the word for strengthen or build up. In verses 3, 4, 5, 12, 17, 26 Paul uses the Greek word ***oikodome***. This word means to build up or edify. In verse 40, Paul sums up the entire passage with... “But all things should be done decently and in order.” Just make sure it's ***His*** order not ours.
- It is obvious that the church was in great confusion and what follows is Paul's attempt to bring order and edification to the confusing and unbiblical use of tongues.

**Verse 1:** “Pursue” love (***dioko***). It means to follow after or hunt down. In this debate love is most often overlooked. That's

why Paul put chapter 13 between the two other disciplinary chapters.

- It's okay to desire gifts but the motivation should be love, not personal edification.
- Notice that Paul clearly states that prophecy is the superior gift. The position of tongues is not at the top. Why has it become such a dominate, overbearing subject?

Actually, speaking in tongues is not the greatest proof of being filled with the Spirit. Gifts can be faked and proven to be fake. Neither is casting out demons, healing, or prophecy. Note Matthew 7. How do we confirm the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit. **We must check for the fruit of the Spirit.** That's why I teach you that your spiritual gifts are inextricably tied to the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit cannot be faked. You can fool me with tree bark or leaves, but when I see the fruit I know what the tree is. Listen to Jesus if you don't believe me.

### **Matt 7:15-23**

15 "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16 **By their fruit you will recognize them.** Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my

Father who is in heaven. 22 **Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'** 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

NIV

\*\*\* The proof of the filling of the Holy Spirit is not the gifts of the Spirit but the fruit of the Spirit.

**Verse 2:** The text is better translated “a” god not “God.” John MacArthur rightly notes that the Greek text is anarthrous (The TR has the article). That means there is no definite article there. It can and should be translated “a” god. In other words, the Corinthians were bringing the pagan practices of the day (worshiping pagan gods) into the Christian church services.

### **1 Corinthians 14:1-5**

In the church at Corinth much of the tongues-speaking had taken on the form and flavor of those pagan ecstasies. Emotionalism all but neutralized their rational senses, and selfish exhibitionism was common, with everyone wanting to do and say his own thing at the same time (v.26). Services were bedlam and chaos, with little worship and little edification taking place.

(from The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Copyright © Moody Press and John MacArthur, Jr., 1983-2007.)

### **1 Corinthians 14:1-5**

The type of tongues the Corinthians practiced had no edifying value at all. It could not speak to men; it could give them no instruction or exhortation. It could only speak to God. I believe a better translation, however, is to “a god.” The Greek has no definite article, and such anarthrous constructions usually are

translated with an indefinite article (see Acts 17:23, where the same form of the [god] is used in reference to "an unknown god"). (from The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Copyright © Moody Press and John MacArthur, Jr., 1983-2007.)

- This is further supported by the fact that the text says the man who does this speaks to **“his”** own spirit. The grammar reflects a dative or locative case (JM states this is locative- I personally did not see a locative). ***The*** Holy Spirit is not what is intended but the man’s spirit.
- This is supported, as JM notes, that no scriptural record exists where men speak to God in any other way except through intelligible language. I agree. In fact, God tells us not to do so.

### **Matthew 6:7-8**

*7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*

*NIV*

- People today are more interested in mysterious and supernatural miracles than what is true, edifying, and biblical.
- If one speaks by his own spirit or another spirit than the Holy Spirit- no wonder you can’t be edified and understand it- it’s simply not from God. God is the author of language; why in the world would He need us to speak in some esoteric language to get more benefits for our prayers. God actually knows what we are going to pray before we do.

### **Galatians 1:8-9**

*8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned.*

*NIV*

- If a person is not in their right mind when he speaks, he risks cursing the name of Jesus and being eternally condemned. (12:3) This is not just a matter of difference in doctrine; it might determine eternity.
- No person in the church could understand, or literally, “hear.” The pagan mystery religions were enticing due to their lack of understanding. They were esoteric in nature. People like the mysterious.

**Illustration:** I have had numerous charismatics and tongue speakers tell me that as they speak in tongues, or go into trances, they have no idea what they say or from where it comes. They claim no understanding as to what they speak. Many claim they have no control over the force that makes them speak in tongues. “I could not help it” they say. If you are not in control of your spirit, it’s not from God! Are you willing to pray to your God in a language or with words you don’t understand? That’s foolish.

### **1 Corinthians 14:32**

*32 The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets.*

*NIV*

My job here is to make the gospel clear!!! Not obscure it. I do not speak to the intellectually superior, or to the philosophers, or the super Christians. I’m speaking to sinners saved by grace who seek an edifying personal Word from the Holy Spirit and the eternal

God. Who, by the way, came to earth to make the gospel plain and simple.

**Verse 3: Our preaching should do three things to avoid obscurity.**

1. Edification-strengthening: *oikodome*
2. Encouragement- exhortation: *paraklesis*
3. Comfort- be with/beside: *paramuthia*

*If your tongue speaking doesn't do these three things it's not from God.*

**Verse 4:** Paul speaks sarcastically as he does in **verse 16**.  
Notice also 4:8-10

### **1 Corinthians 4:8-10**

*8 You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; and indeed, I wish that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you. 9 For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. 10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are distinguished, but we are without honor.*

NASU

- 12:7 tells us that the gifts are for the common good. That is indisputable. Paul is not saying that personal edification is what is important. He is simply showing the Corinthian's selfish nature in using their gifts, by way of sarcasm.
- On the other hand, prophecy edifies the entire church. People claim to have a secret prayer language. What good is that for the body? It's not. The gifts are for the body, not self-edification.

**Verse 5:** This verse speaks of the genuine gift of languages. Paul is still being sarcastic. For the entire membership to have the same gift would contradict what he said in 12:12-13.

- Paul uses this statement in contrast only to show the importance of prophecy/preaching. Unless there was, and is, interpretation, what is spoken cannot be spoken biblically.

**Illustration:** At this point, Mark Rutland, one of the best Church of God preachers, gives his own followers and all Charismatics a lesson in biblical interpretation. Many, still to this day, speak in tongues without interpretation, and also allowing more than three speakers, and also women to speak in tongues in the church. If you are going to hold to modern day tongues, you at least ought to be biblical in it. If you don't, you prove yourself a liar.

Actually, the word for interpretation here has as its root the word **hermeneuo**. We know this as hermeneutics. This is the science of biblical interpretation. This refers to interpretation, to explain thoroughly, or to expound. Sounds like preaching doesn't it? Is speaking in another language that people cannot understand and that is not explained biblical? No but it is demonic.

- The Word cannot get any clearer than this. If it's not biblical, you are out of God's will.
- But it does get clearer because Paul illustrates the superior nature of prophecy. Prophecy has the first priority.

**Verse 6:** This verse, without actually saying it, describes one of the main problems in the Corinthian church and in our world of Christendom today. The matter of interpretation and understanding is the point.

- What good is an internal message only known to the individual, i.e., a revelation or word of knowledge, if it is not spoken to the body? Paul states that any spiritual message given is not for the individual but for the body.
- Second, the external message, i.e., prophecy or word of instruction, is likewise useless if there is no interpretation.
- **If the message is not understood it is useless.**

**Quote:** John MacArthur notes... *“It is incredible that some Christians put a premium on private or en masse unintelligible utterances that no one, including the speaker, can even attempt to understand.”* He goes on to give examples of how many have stood and spoken in Hebrew, or Greek, or other languages, that have been interpreted incorrectly or with no thought at all to giving a correct message from God. This is at best deceptive, and at worst, down right lying and self-centered, and this promotes self-glorification.

- The words used here are:
  1. Revelation- **apokalupsis** which means to reveal or uncover. Same word that names the book of revelation. “The Revealing.”
  2. Knowledge- **gnosis** which means experiential knowledge. Recognition, familiarity, and understanding are several translations.
  3. Prophecy- **prophetia** which refers to the office and the job of the prophet. All people prophesy when they proclaim God’s word.
  4. Word of Instruction- **didache** which comes from **didasko**. Both refer to teaching, doctrine or creeds. Tutoring and instructing is the emphasis. It’s strange that those who were supposed to bring a word of doctrine were those who violated the act of prophecy

and instruction with lies and self-glorification. That's danger in the first degree.

**Verse 7:** This verse has been used as an example by tongues speakers and charismatics to prove that what took place in the church in Corinth was actually ecstatic utterance. I could not agree more. And that is exactly what Paul is condemning.

Points to note about tongues in Corinth:

1. A cursory reading of the text shows the church in Corinth to be problematic. Divisions, immorality, paganism in the church, incest, etc.
2. The church was spiritually immature.
3. The corrective nature of the book must be considered. Paul is correcting the church for its many problems. Dr. Millikin notes that most of the book deals with Paul's treatment of the churches problems.
4. It is imperative to distinguish between what the Christians in Corinth were calling the gift of tongues and what the actual biblical gift was. That's actually the crux of the matter with me. Paul does speak of ecstatic utterance but it is not in a good light. He also speaks of the true biblical gift. I believe both were in the church.
5. Dr. Millikin also notes that Paul deals with this problem from a practical, rather than a doctrinal standpoint. That makes it hard to develop doctrine from this chapter concerning the nature and prominence of tongues. **The texts of Mark and Acts must be used as well to build doctrine. Luke introduces us to the greatest manifestation of tongues in the NT in Acts. Luke uses the word *dialektos*. Dialect.**
6. Finally, it is obvious that Paul is answering a question that the Corinthians asked him about tongues. It is hard to go

back and reconstruct the question from the advice Paul gives them. What we do know, is that even the Corinthians were confused about the nature of tongues or they would not have asked the question in the first place if there wasn't confusion and emotionalism.

**Verse 8:** The OT call to battle was given by the one who played the battle cry. In the wilderness there were millions of Jews scattered across the desert on thousands of acres. You could not just pass the word around and get a clear message to the people. The trumpet player would send the message through the air so all could hear at once. Now suppose the trumpet player could not play the correct notes? What if he played the battle cry when it was just time to break camp and move? What if he gave the wrong directions when and several tribes went off in the wrong direction?

- When the message of God is given it is for the entire group, and it must be clear or confusion, misdirection and failure take place. This is a perfect illustration of the camp in Corinth. What a mess they were. They are still with us today.

**Verse 9:** The word in the NIV for intelligible, and in other translations, is the word “**clear.**” The Greek says, “**make it easy to understand.**” The word is *eusemos*, which means “*easy to understand.*”

- Paul says that, “So it is with you.” Paul says that the tongues in Corinth were not understandable.

**Illustration:** In seminary, we had a scholarly preaching seminar each year. Some of the brightest and best men in the country would come to the seminary and speak on different topics. It was amazing to see how many students cared less for the lecture series

each year. One year when a certain man, I will not say his name, came to the school, it was so lofty that even many of the professors had to look up some of the things that were said so as to understand. Now, that's good for the setting at the seminary. Young preachers should learn to study and research. They should be aware of all areas of theology and learn all they can. However, that's not appropriate in Sunday worship. Pastor tries to challenge you occasionally to step out of your comfort zone, but to place the gospel on a shelf that's hard to reach is not good because it's not easy to understand. My job is to take the complex and make it easy and palatable for the least of God's children.

- I have heard so many preachers that simply speak into the air. The message must be understood to be effective. ***If it's not understood in English, I certainly know that it would not be understood in some gibberish spoken into the air.***

**Verse 10: Quote:** John MacArthur...*"It is the meaning that makes language language."*

- The context and words here prove positive that real spoken language is that to which Paul is referring (Voices). He is clearly showing that the gift of tongues is a known language spoken that is unknown to the speaker. Even if we do not understand the language, someone does.
- This makes interpretation necessary. For the speaker and the hearers both need interpretation.

**Verse 11:** In NT times anyone that could not understand Greek was called a Barbarian. Paul uses a play on words here. The word for "foreigner" is **barbaros**. Our English word is barbarian. We call barbarians people who are primitive and backwoods people that can't communicate with others. The word **barbaros** is an

onomatopoetic word. It is used to describe the sounds that one hears when you hear a language you do not understand. All the sounds, sound alike. Today we would say it is muffled or it sounds like gobbledygook. Those words are onomatopoetic. *The tongues in Corinth were gobbledygook.*

**Verse 12:** Paul says, “so church, seek the gifts that actually build up the church.” Use your zeal for edification.

**Verse 13:** The church was to pray for those who could interpret what was said and those who had the biblical gift of tongues should pray for interpretation or stop speaking.

**Verse 14:** Paul illustrates. If I speak in a tongue I don’t understand... my (*mou*) spirit (little s) prays but my mind is not made the better because I don’t understand.

- *If the true gift of tongues is meaningless without interpretation, how much more meaningless is a pagan counterfeit tongue that is spoken in a church service?”*

**Verse 15:** Two thoughts for this verse are important.

1. The spirit spoken of here is not “The” spirit. The Grammar speaks in the Dative case referring to personal reference. It refers to the man’s spirit. Charismatics like to say this refers to The Holy Spirit.
2. Second, is the fact that Paul says that we are to engage the mind in our praying and praising. The heart is only half and that half will fool you. Paul insists that to worship without the mind engaged is foolish. The mind is more important than the emotions. Emotions trick us continually but the mind overrides unbiblical thoughts. You may not feel saved one day, but if you are washed in the blood, you are saved. Why, because the bible says so. Your emotions may say

speaking in a language that you do not understand, and that cannot be interpreted, is okay... at that point, you should engage the mind and think biblically.

- May I make a statement...? *“You cannot love something you don’t know anything about. Knowledge precedes love.”*
- If the mind is not engaged, the worship is dangerous.
- John MacArthur notes that the Holy Spirit cannot pray through a man while bypassing his mind.
- Have you ever loved a song until you actually heard the words and then your mind kicked in and you no longer loved the song, e.g., (My Sweet Lord).

**Verse 16-17:** The translation in the original language is revealing. *Else when thou shalt bless (eulogeo, a good word) with the spirit shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned (idioets or ignorant) how say he amen (let it be so) at thy giving thanks seeing what you say he does not understand.*

- If you want to isolate people from your fellowship, the quickest way to do it is to make them feel ignorant and don’t inform them of what’s going on.
- When we feel like we are missing something because we are not informed, it makes us feel awful and it pushes us away. This makes you feel stupid. Nobody likes to feel stupid. Embarrassed people can’t worship.
- All should be included and all edified.

**Verse 18:** Paul here returns to the plural use of tongues. It is clear that when he speaks of tongues that are a biblical gift, he uses a plural form. That would relate to “languages,” plural. When Paul speaks of the use of tongues singular he refers to gibberish, which cannot be **“gibberishes.”** In verses 2 and 4 the

term is singular. Also in 13, 14, 19, and 27 the term is singular. Note 5, 6, 18, 22, 23, and 39 where the term is plural. **This is a key to proper interpretation of this chapter.**

- When Paul spoke in tongues (which there is no biblical record of him doing so) it was the true biblical gift of a **known** language but **unknown** to him. Paul either had the gift of interpretation or someone in his posse had it.

**Verse 19:** Greek does not give us a word for anything higher than 10 thousand. The word here is *murioi* which we get the English word **myriad** from. Paul really uses hyperbole here. He states that 5 words of prophecy that are understandable are better than myriads of words in a tongue that does not come from God, does not edify anybody in the church and that glorify God in heaven.

## **II. The Purpose of Tongues in the Church: Verses 20-25**

One of the greatest errors of those who speak in tongues and those in the Charismatic movement is that most of them will not listen to doctrinal comments about their beliefs and about tongues... likewise about the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The next two sections explain two aspects of tongues ***biblically*** that modern tongue speakers do not like to hear or talk about. They reject those who use the bible to build doctrinal foundations concerning **purpose** and **procedure**.

We, will actually look at the scriptures at this point as we continue. We have determined that prophecy has priority over tongues. Now we shall see the purpose and the proper procedure for tongues. Anytime you use the bible to defend your doctrine

against those who don't use their bible, you will be attacked as a Pharisee. Stand your ground and preach the word.

**Illustration: From Charismatic Chaos, John MacArthur: Page 13ff**

*One network executive wrote this to me: "Please reconsider your policy of dealing with the charismatic movement and other controversial topics on your radio broadcasts. Though we share your convictions on these issues, many of our listeners do not. These people are dear brothers and sisters in Christ. We do not feel it is helpful to the cause of Christ to attack what they believe. We are committed to keeping peace among brethren and in the body of Christ. Thanks you for being sensitive to these concerns."*

*"That kind of thinking sacrifices truth for the sake of superficial peace. Such an attitude pervades the contemporary church. In effect, it has given Charismatic extremists the freedom to propound fantastic views while imposing a code of silence on those who object, those who do speak out inevitably are branded divisive, strident, or unloving. The Legacy of such a position is not unity and peace, but confusion and turmoil. Proof of that can be seen in the hundreds of churches, missions boards, schools, and other Christian organizations that have allowed charismatic influence to seep in and go unanswered. They ultimately must either sacrifice their non-charismatic position altogether or suffer the devastating effects of a split.*

*It seems ironic that critics of charismatic extremism are so frequently scolded for being unloving and divisive. Listen to these comments by charismatic Benny Hinn: "Somebody's attacking me because of something I'm teaching. Let me tell you something, brother: You watch it! ...You know, I've looked for one verse in the Bible; I just can't seem to find it. One verse that said 'If you don't like them, kill them.' I really wished I could find it!...You stink, frankly—that's the way I think about it!..."*

*Sometimes I wish God will give me a Holy Ghost machine gun; I'll blow your head off!" ["Praise-a-thon" broadcast on the Trinity Broadcasting Network (November 8, 1990).]*

*Paul Crouch is scarcely more charitable. Of his critics, he said, "I think they're damned, and on the way to hell and I don't think there's any redemption for them... I say, to hell will you! Get out of my life! Get out of my way!... And I want to say to all you scribes, Pharisees, heresy hunters—all of you that are going around picking little bits of doctrinal error out of everybody's eyes... Get out of God's way; quit blocking God's bridges, or God's going shoot you if I don't... Get out of my life! I don't want to even talk to you or hear you! I don't want to see your ugly face! Get out of my face in Jesus' name." ["Praise the Lord" broadcast on the Trinity Broadcasting Network (April 2, 1991)].*

*Hinn's and Crouch's railings were aimed at godly men and women (many of them fellow charismatics) who had raised valid biblical questions about some of the novel Word Faith teachings (see Chapter 12) frequently aired on Crouch's television network. Crouch called his critics' analyses "doctrinal doodoo." I am not aware of a single incident anywhere—certainly not on live international television—where anyone has publicly spoken disparagingly of charismatics in the kind of savage and caustic language used in those two samples. Why would anyone consider it unloving or ungracious to examine doctrine biblically, but acceptable to defend oneself with such Philistine threats?"*

### **Tongues do not belong to Charismatics. The Holy Spirit does not belong to the Charismatics.**

- The **“Word Faith”** teachings do not allow you to name it and claim it; it likewise does not allow Christians to make up their own doctrine and rewrite scripture.

- Many of my fellow Baptists will even take issue with me on the topic. Well, tell it to Jesus. If you want to talk with me about it, bring your bible and an open mind, and I will show you what God says. If what He says is not good enough, we need not talk any further. If you don't believe the black and white, why would you believe me?

## II. The Purpose of Tongues: Verses 20-25

Like all the gifts, God has a purpose for this gift. Today people use the gift of tongues or, at least the counterfeit gift of tongues, for unbiblical purposes. Paul clearly states the purpose for the gift in the section.

**Verse 20:** The sins of the flesh and poor doctrine come from spiritual immaturity in this church.

- Biblical ignorance leads to emotionalism and poor doctrine. Doctrine determines behavior.
- What a contrast... the church was mature in its knowledge of evil but immature in their knowledge of spiritual matters.

### Isaiah 5:20

*“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.”*

NIV

### John 3:19-20

*19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.*

**Verse 21:** The chosen people of God were told hundreds of years before Christ about Pentecost. They would see the true miracle of tongues and believe God. Right?

- Wrong. All they did was say that the Apostles were drunk (Acts 2:13). Even the chosen race of Israel did not respond to the day of Pentecost.
- **Prophecy is for believers and tongues was for unbelievers.**
- **Today tongues is used for everything but unbelievers.**

**Verse 22:** Paul says, “So then, tongues are a sign, not for believers, but for unbelievers.”

- Tongues cursed Israel
- Tongues blessed unbelievers
- Tongues showed prophecy and its validity.

**Question:** What does God’s word say tongues are for?

- The word “sign” is used in the text with tongues but actually is not in the text the second time. “Sign” has been added.
- Some translations make the assumption that it should be added. If they do it is usually italicized to let you know it.

### **1 Corinthians 14:22-23**

*22 So then tongues are for a **sign**, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophecy **is for a sign**, not to unbelievers but to those who believe.*

NASU

- It is important to note this because we must not make the mistake of saying that prophecy is not for unbelievers.

Prophecy was not a sign gift. Prophecy was not used for a short period of time only to pass away, or to be a sign to point to something else. Prophecy could be used and could be understood and not have to be a sign pointing to a powerful God. That's why tongues faded away and is no longer needed. Prophecy has also changed from foretelling to forth telling.

**Verse 23:** Even the proper biblical gift of tongues could cause confusion if proper etiquette is not followed. Tongues were for unbelievers, but if they (The unbelievers) came into a church filled with uninterrupted languages, confusion would reign.

- The words here speak of those who are unlearned and those who are unbelievers. They are obviously those who do not know about Jesus. They come in and hear all these people speaking in voices they do not understand. It might sound like our fellowship time. They are confused and withdrawn.
- They will say, “Are you not all mad.” It means **“out of your mind or beside oneself.”** (Greek) *Mainomai-* to be beside oneself. *A frenzied rage at self. Confusion.*

**Illustration:** My experience at Norma Wright's church.

**Verses 24-25:** What happens when a sinner (**GK- the ignorant or unlearned**) comes into the church when someone is **preaching**?

1. **Conviction:** They see themselves as they really are. They see God for who He really is.
2. **Calling to account:** Conviction calls for motivation unlike guilt that only makes you depressed. The sinner learns that he will be judged (by all).

3. **Their secrets will be laid bare:** Convicted people think that everybody sees and hears their thoughts that go on in their heads, and that people know what they have been up to.
4. **They fall down:** They submit to God. They come home. They repent. They come to their senses. The mystery of salvation becomes clear to them. Revelation.
5. **They get up:** They worship. The result of falling down is worship. For the first time they say, “God is really among us.”
  - Wow, can that really happen? Yes, But only when faith comes by hearing and hearing the Word of God. Gibberish, or speaking in some gobbledygook, never saved anybody. Falling in the floor never saved anybody.
  - What’s better for you... seeing emotionalism or seeing people saved by grace?

### **III. The Procedure of Tongues in the Church: Verses 26-40**

**Quote:** *John MacArthur says that the divine pattern of God is order and significance.*

**Verse 26:** When you come together let those who have a hymn, a word of instruction, a revelation, or an interpretation- bring it in order.

- Make sure that what you do has order and significance.
- Again, all this is to be done for the strengthening of the church. Period!

\*\*\* Some believe that the more a service is disorganized that the more spiritual it is. That’s not true. Planning and preparation are not ungodly. Lack of planning is called laziness.

- Always be willing to let God work and have control of the service. Always give God room to work and allow Him to take over, or take you into a different direction. Allow for the Holy Spirit to have freedom in the service. As a matter of fact, let Him continually be in control.
- But by all means, have what I call, “sacred preparation.”
- Your ministry and the service are for building the church. If it doesn’t build the church, stop doing it.

**Verse 27:** This verse is as clear as a bell, and I personally do not know of one Charismatic church that uses the gift of tongues as this verse says they are to use them. **Compare this to what you see on television.**

- **I know of no church that uses real languages and does it the way this verse describes. None!**
- **Ecstatic gibberish does not allow for sacred worship.**

**\*\*\* The clear test of biblical tongues is in the meaning, the order, and in the number. Real language, no more than three and one at a time.**

**Verse 28:** How many times do these people speak in a tongue and no one interprets? It happens thousands of times a day on TV and in their church services.

- If there is no one present with the gift of interpretation, the speaker is to sense that God is speaking to him only or to keep silent.

**\*\*\* A child could understand this verse.**

**Verse 29:** The same rule applies for prophets. Even the message in their own language should be spoken so all could hear and so all could understand.

- What was preached was to be heard and understood so that the Apostles or leaders could evaluate what was said. Today, Charismatics do not allow anybody to evaluate what they say. We are called Pharisees if we do.
- Well, let me tell them something. I have a right to evaluate anybody that calls himself a prophet of God. The scripture says I am to do this. A true prophet of God welcomes evaluation in the most intense way. If his words are true they will be held up by God. If not, he is a fool.

**Verse 30:** If a revelation comes the prophet stops and the revelation is given. Today we do not need an evaluation. You have the evaluation in your hand. The scriptures.

**Verse 31:** All the people in the church get to use their gifts and in order.

**Verse 32:** This is my favorite verse of all. I have heard many times from tongue speakers, “I cannot help it when it comes over me; I just have to do it.” They say, “I don’t know what I say I just open my mouth and it comes out.” “I don’t know what I’m saying or doing when it happens.”

- What does the bible say to this? **“THE SPIRIT OF THE PROPHETS IS SUBJECT TO THE CONTROL OF THE PROPHETS.”**

\*\*\* God does not force Himself on anyone. He never allows or demands us to operate from unconsciousness or in any mental state which does not allow our minds to be in control or aware of the process we are in.

- It really bothers me that some people like disorder and confusion and think it spiritual.

**Verse 33:** Clearly and plainly God is a God of order and peace in worship. That does not mean we can't show emotion or express praise. We are told to come into the house of God with singing and shouting (2 Chron 15:14). I don't care much for a dead service but disorder and confusion that draws attention to one's self is just not godly.

### **Zechariah 9:9**

*9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion!*

***Shout**, Daughter of Jerusalem!*

*See, your king comes to you,  
righteous and having salvation,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

*NIV*

### **Psalm 100:1-2**

***Shout for joy** to the LORD, all the earth.*

*2 Worship the LORD with **gladness**;  
come before him with **joyful** songs.*

*NIV*

### **Psalm 98:4-6**

*4 **Shout** for joy to the LORD, all the earth,  
**burst** into **jubilant song** with music;*

*5 make music to the LORD with the harp,  
with the harp and the sound of **singing**,*

*6 with trumpets and the **blast** of the ram's horn —  
**shout** for joy before the LORD, the King.*

*NIV*

**Psalm 71:23-24**

*23 My lips will **shout** for joy  
when I sing praise to you —  
I, whom you have redeemed.*

*24 My tongue will **tell** of your righteous acts  
all day long,  
NIV*

**Verse 34-35:** I take this to mean what it says. Women were not prophets or tongue speakers. As in all the churches Paul says. In modern tongue speaking, all the women speak in tongues.

- Ask at home.
- It's the law.
- It's a disgrace to speak in church.

**Verse 36:** This word is for all people then and now. “Do you place your thoughts and beliefs over the written word of God?” Our selfish expressions, our preferences and self-glorifications are not to be placed over the word. **JUST BELIEVE WHAT IT SAYS.**

\*\*\*\* It did not originate with us and we are not the only people it has come to. All Christians everywhere are to be subject to the Word. If it didn't originate with you then you are subject to it... obey it!

**2 Peter 1:19-21**

*20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

**Verse 37:** A nice way to say, “If you disagree, you are wrong.”

**Verse 38: If you ignore this then you will be ignored.**  
Listen, that's great advice!!!

**Illustration:** Someone called me awhile back and wanted to meet with me. I asked, “what about?” They said they wanted to sit and chew the theological fat for a while. This person does not go to church on a regular basis and is not a member of any church. He does not tithe. He does not believe that most preachers are teaching correct doctrine. He does not believe that preachers are called into the ministry. He wants to debate me over a few passages of scripture he heard me preach.

Know what I did? **I verse 38ed him.** I ignored him. I don’t sit and talk to people that do absolutely nothing to build the kingdom. I don’t have time for people that sit around and pontificate and intellectually stimulate themselves into thinking they are so intelligent that God has surely noticed them above all the rest. I don’t have time for people who want to debate the very scripture they disobey continuously by not tithing, serving, supporting, loving, going, and who never minister to others in Jesus name.

God has taken notice of these people alright. He see them going straight to hell thinking they are God’s gift to the world.

**Verse 39:** So then, don’t forbid the true gift of tongues. But I say be eager to preach the word.

**Verse 40:** Paul concludes this section with great advice for the worship service. Fitting and orderly, that’s what it should reflect.

**Closing:** I conclude these three chapters with this thought. If you are **not** leading men and women to Christ, I don’t care what you have that I don’t have. If the gifts are more important to your ministry budget than people coming to Christ, keep your baptisms and experiences. If the gifts are used to bring attention to your ego and to prove how great you are, God help you. Bottom line is

this... we will all answer for our witness, for our doctrine, and our effort to bring glory to God and not man.

Today is the day of salvation. Respond now. Right now.