

## 1 Corinthians – Week 45

### I. Review

#### A. 1Cor. 12:4-11

- i. Judging by chapter 14, it seems like the Corinthians were acting as if tongues was THEE spiritual gift to possess!
- ii. But Paul explains that, although there is only one Holy Spirit, He gives different gifts to different people.
- iii. These different gifts, like the different services (ministries) that exist in the Church, are designed to glorify God and for the common good of the Church!
- iv. One spiritual gift is not superior to another since every spiritual gift is empowered by God.
- v. The Spirit has sovereignty as to who gets what gift.

### II. Continuation

A. 1Cor. 12:12-14 (ESV), *“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup>For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body— Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”*

- i. Again, Paul makes the point that just as the human body has many parts, with different functions, so it is with the Body of Christ, the Church (cf. Ephesians 1:22-23).
- ii. Some try to use this passage to defend denominationalism.
  1. However, the context is addressing diversity of functions within the Church, not diversity of doctrines, beliefs and churches.
  2. Also, it is good to note that Catholicism and Protestantism came centuries after the first century Church.
- iii. *“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body”*
  1. Some suppose Paul was making reference to the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
  2. However, the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred at Pentecost (Acts 2).
  3. Paul said in Ephesians 4:4-5 that there is only one baptism. Which one?
    - a. John’s baptism? No, that ended after Jesus rose from the dead:
      - i. Those baptized unto John’s baptism were commanded to be baptized in the name of Jesus (Acts 19:1-5).
    - b. Holy Spirit baptism? No, that prophecy was already fulfilled at Pentecost.
    - c. Fire baptism? No, that is referring to judgment (Matt. 3:11-12)
    - d. Baptism in the name of Jesus? Yes, that baptism was practiced from Acts 2:38 on.
  4. Therefore, Paul must be referring to water baptism.
    - a. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit that a believer is baptized into God’s Church.
      - i. In Acts 2:38-47, the Lord added the saved to the *“ekklessia – Church (KJV)”* – some versions say *“to their number.”*
      - ii. The Lord does this through the Holy Spirit at baptism.
- iv. *“All were made to drink of the one Spirit”*
  1. That is, they all has the indwelling of the Spirit, which was given to them at baptism (Acts 2:38; 18:8).
  2. This passage relates to what Jesus said in John 7:37-39...
    - a. *“On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. <sup>38</sup>Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” <sup>39</sup>Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”* John 7:37-39 (ESV)

**B. 1Cor. 12:14-20 (ESV),** *“For the body does not consist of one member but of many. <sup>15</sup>If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,’ that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,’ that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? <sup>18</sup>But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. <sup>19</sup>If all were a single member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.”*

**i. The human body illustration:**

**1. Isn't the hand part of the body?**

**a. If yes, then Paul begs the question: Aren't those who prophesy belong to the Church?**

**2. Imagine if the body was just one organ? Not only would it be a frightening sight, like those old black-and-white thrillers, showing a detached crawling hand – it would be useless! How will the hand eat? See? Hear?**

**a. A body with one organ would not be a body!**

**b. In the same way, a church where every member had the same function would not be a body of Christ.**

**c. As it is, the Church is the Body of Christ and every member within His Body is given an assigned function by God, through the Holy Spirit (cf. 1Cor. 12:11).**

**ii. Paul's point: Every member is an integral part of the Body of Christ, no one should feel as if they are unimportant or functionless!**

**1. There are no vestigial organs in the Body of Christ!**

**a. Note: Vestigial organs are considered by some scientists as being useless.**

**b. By the way, there are no vestigial organs in the physical body as well, but that's another class! ☺**

**iii. 1Cor. 12:21-24a (ESV),** *“The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup>and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unrepresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, <sup>24</sup>which our more presentable parts do not require.”*

**1. Perhaps Paul chose the eyes, hands, heads and feet as examples because of their prominence in the body. Even though they are prominent and important they cannot stand alone. They need each other.**

**2. Even with our own bodies, there are certain body parts that we may deem either insignificant or unrepresentable, yet we treat those parts with honor and modesty.**

**a. They are all still considered part of our bodies and are cared for.**

**3. Paul's point:**

**a. We need each other; We need each other's God-given talents and abilities; We need each other's presence, fellowship, resources and encouragement.**

**b. This is why he says the following...**

- iv. **1Cor. 12:24b-27 (ESV)**, “*...But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, <sup>25</sup>that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. <sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.*”
1. **The Church is to function like a human body:**
    - a. **Although we are one church, each member is called to care for the other!**
    - b. **If a member is going through trials, we all suffer with that member!**
    - c. **If a member is being honored, we all rejoice with that member!**
    - d. **We all belong to each other and we love each other equally!**
- v. **1Cor. 12:28-31 (ESV)**, “*And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. <sup>29</sup>Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? <sup>30</sup>Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup>But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.*”
1. **Again, Paul is emphasizing that all do not have the same function, but are all part of a living, active Church!**
  2. **“*But earnestly desire the higher gifts*”**
    - a. **With insight from 1Cor. 14:12, Paul seems to be encouraging them to desire those gifts that would help them excel in building up the church.**
      - i. **1Cor. 14:12 (ESV)**, “*So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.*”
  3. **Now, Paul shows them the most excellent way to function as a Body: Love one another!**