

# Just A Minute! *With Scripture*

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be numbered, or made bold for emphasis.

## I Corinthians 12: The First of Three Chapters Setting Order to Spiritual Gifts

**"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." (Verse 1)**

I Corinthians 12 introduces the topic of spiritual gifts, addressing the confusion and ignorance in Corinth. Some miraculous powers were briefly given to the Body of Christ for edification, until the Word was completed. Historically, God used spiritual gifts to teach Israel, and at this time, they were also being used to provoke the Jews to be saved into God's new, Gentile 'time of grace.' Israel has temporarily fallen from their special status as God's Nation: *"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall: God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy."* (Rom. 11:11)

The topic of spiritual gifts begins by teaching the distinct responsibilities within the Godhead. Read & study it for yourself:

**Verses 1-3-An Introduction:** The Corinthians had a history of being deceived by idolatry. *"Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led."* (Verse 2) Instead of being 'led by the Spirit' (Rom. 8:14), they were moved from the Truth, seduced, and 'led by their flesh.' Paul's goal was that they heed his basic instructions to grow, and for a time, they were to: *"But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."* (Vs. 31)

**Verses 4-6-Division of Labor:** 1) The Spirit has the 'diversities of gifts.' 2) The Lord Jesus retains the 'differences of administrations' in the Body. 3) God maintains the 'diversities of operations.' The remainder of I Corinthians 12 seems to be sectioned by these three topics.

**Verses 7-11: The Spirit:** There are nine gifts listed that were given unto saints by the Spirit. Each had a particular purpose to be profitable unto God: *"...the word of wisdom...the word of knowledge...faith...gifts of healing...working of miracles...prophecy...discerning of spirits...divers kinds of tongues...the interpretation of tongues."* (Verses 8-10)

**Verses 12-26: Jesus Christ:** His role relates to the Body of Christ. Each member is connected with unique and needed function & responsibility to walk by faith in what they learn, in order to live God's will, such as with these gifts. *"For the body is not one member, but many."* (Vs. 14) Some saints 'seem' to have a more important role, yet even the feeble are needed and to be honored, *"Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary."* (Vs. 22)

**Verses 27-31: The Father:** This last section provides insight in the overall operations of God. He manifested sign gifts through the Church to accomplish His purpose in these operations. They were ranked in order of importance: *"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."* (Vs 28)

**To Do:** Meditate upon these things. Study 'how' spiritual gifts fulfilled God's purpose. Determine when they were to end.

## Tendencies Using Spiritual Gifts

The Corinthians were carnal babes, having trouble with understanding even the basic doctrine Paul had taught them. (I Cor. 3:1-3) They tended to be high-minded & self focused, not preferring others, nor recognizing God's purpose for gifts.

Paul had already taught the Corinthian Church *"...not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another."* (I Cor. 4:6) They were to instead prefer their brothers: *"Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."* (I Cor. 8:13)

The Corinthians were confused about the function God had for these special powers and responded in the flesh. Self-exaltation resulted when they focused on spiritual gifts.

Personal desires and vain imaginations would have influenced thinking. As they exalted 'their new abilities,' the tendency would have been to put others down if they did not manifest the best gifts. (I Cor. 12: 29-31) Yet, it was the Spirit that gave saints the powers, as it pleased God, according to His pre-determined will. God's three main purposes:

- 1) To verify Paul's authority as God's apostle. (II Cor. 12:122)
- 2) To provide edification until the Word was complete. ( I Cor. 13:10)
- 3) To provoke Israel to be saved. (Rom. 11:14)



Search it out!

Living As Who You Are In Christ

**I Corinthians 12: Proper Understanding of Spiritual Gifts in the Body**

Examine verses!



Chapter 12 provides us with the background needed to realize where the Corinthians saints were in their thinking and some basics about spiritual gifts. Think/study these things:

**1. Helping words:** Paul used particular terms to help students understand. Skim through the chapter to locate the words: 'But,' 'but now,' 'wherefore,' 'for,' and 'that.' How many times are each used? Look up the definitions, then go back and reread the chapter to see if it helps in understanding.

**2. Key Words:** Repeating words are a flag to help us in our study. Scan the chapter again, this time notice 3-4 key words that are used several times; they indicate an important topic. Meditate upon how they help you understand what Paul was teaching. Look up definitions as you sense the need.

**3. Terms have more than one meaning:** When the word 'baptized' is used, saints may automatically

think it refers to water baptism. Is Verse 13 referring to water or a spiritual baptism? Use a concordance to find other places in Paul's epistles where he uses this term. Context gives clues as to what kind of baptism.

**4. Meditate on verses that 'seem' out of place:** At times, a topic does not seem to be related to the issue you think is being addressed. In Chapter 12, in the middle of dealing with signs, he brings up a lot of detail about the Body of Christ. Meditate upon why! How does it relate and help the reader to understand the topic of spiritual gifts?

**5. Questions are a method used to teach:** Notice the last two verses of the chapter. How many questions were used? What were the Corinthians thinking that caused Paul to ask them? Does it help you in study?

**6. Transitional Verse:** Read Verse 31 & I Corinthians 13. How does Verse 31 prepare us for Chapter 13?

*\*Newer students: Focus on reading Scripture rather than on using many new study insights.*

**Briefly, Why Do Some Believers Still See Miracles & Signs?**

There are four key explanations for those who believe they have seen or experienced spiritual gifts, though they've passed away. In all cases, walking by faith in sound doctrine (Scripture) is the answer. If topics below are new or contrary to your current thinking, pray to think on these things objectively.

**1. Confusion:** a) Saints can lack understanding and conviction in sound doctrine from Paul's epistles. Instead, they base views on feelings, often combined with instructions 'to' Israel, not rightly dividing the Word (II Tim.2:15). Many erroneously use things written to Israel as proof that God is manifesting miracles and healings today.

b) Emotionalism: Really wanting to see God's power can lead saints down a path to look for miracles, misreading circumstances. Incidents called 'miracles' are often common occurrences or just natural sowing and reaping. Believers/unbelievers alike experience things like avoiding a car accident, recovery from illness, or getting a new job.

**2. Bible terms are inaccurately defined:** Scriptural 'healings,' such as what Jesus, Peter, & Paul exhibited were 'immediate cures' of an illness i.e. healing the leper, palsy, fever, and blind. (Matt. 8 & 9) Today, a redefinition of healing might be a slow, temporary, or partial recovery after an operation. This redefining of terms enables miracles to continue. In reality, they are a successful surgical procedure, working with God's natural healing process.

**3. Deception:** a) Dishonest agenda: At times, there are evil people who mislead others, often for financial gain or notoriety. In these cases, something is presented as a true (immediate healing, miracle, prophecy, or tongues), when it was falsified or faked. Trickery deceives the vulnerable, so let the Word be your standard, not what is seen; walk by faith. b) Satan's Influence: There are "...seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." (I Tim. 4:1) Satan is a deceiver, an angel of light, even working in religious systems. These doctrines will entice/convince the unaware. c) Pressure: Group mentality or peer pressure can cause saints to make up or adjust stories to appear miraculous. When someone says they see or hear visions, voices, or have powers, other saints can feel compelled to also do them, caught up emotionally. When someone is desperate for personal comfort or direction from God, he can interpret 'his own' thoughts/desires/dreams as God's prophecy, even seeing it equal to Scripture. (Jer. 29:8-9)

**4. The unexplained:** Christians and non-Christians alike experience unexplainable recoveries that defy odds, or a near miss of a grievous accident. Many unusual circumstances can occur throughout life for many reasons. Man's limited understanding, imagination, and tendency toward being emotional or superstitious makes us susceptible to read into life circumstances, assigning it to be God's miraculous intervention, when it's a natural occurrence.

**To Do:** Read about Satan's influence through the Bible. A few verses to start: II Cor. 11:1-15, II Tim. 3:1-9, Deut. 13:1-3. Study what Scripture says you can do to safeguard yourself from deception.



## Is The Word Sufficient Without Miraculous Gifts?

Today, God empowers a saint's inner man to use the Word within to deal with the problems and sufferings of this life. Basically, it is walking by faith, understanding their 'new identity in Christ,' taught in Romans 6-8. Here, a believer learns how to access Christ's power to make godly choices, and yield. Until a saint matures to understand and really trust this process, the flesh will seek visible evidence to prove God is with them and for them. (i.e. Audible, personal messages, dreams, miraculous healings, special protections, etc.)

As our example, Paul learned to trust and endure. (II Cor. 12:9-10) Rather than remove his thorn in the flesh, God taught him to rely on the Word's power, Christ in him: *"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."*

God's way is to demonstrate His power and glory in us, using the Spirit and Word in the difficulties of life. *"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us...And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* (Rom. 8:18,28)

We can be confident, God fully provides in all situations. Fear can prompt us to pray to take away the very things that God designed to help us grow with His Word. Sufferings, though grievous, are learning opportunities, a natural part of being on earth as God's ambassadors, living in Christ's stead. (II Cor. 5:20) **To Do:** Study daily to store the Word within; it's God's armor that enables us to stand and live.

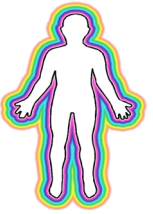
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### The Purpose & Design of the Body of Christ

It is important today for believers to understand what the Body of Christ (BOC) is and how the Lord designed it to function. (I Cor. 12:12-27) Paul teaches that there is no inequality within the BOC and describes the unity of it: *"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ."* (Verse 12) Paul goes on to explain to the saints at Corinth that every member is valued and necessary.

The Corinthian saints were acting a bit lofty and there was jealousy and contempt between them. In Verses 15 to 17 it's explained that not everyone can be the same member of the BOC: *"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing..."* (Vs. 17) God did not intend for the BOC to have duplicate members, but rather that each member be unique and edify one another in Him as explained in Ephesians 4:16: *"From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."*



Paul also points out in I Corinthians 12:25, *"That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another."* The word schism means division or separation. Instead of divisiveness we are to have the same mindset within the BOC: *"Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."* (Phil. 2:2) Having the same mindset is similar to the joys and pains you feel in your own body. When you stub your toe your whole body feels it; or after a brisk run your body enjoys the endorphins. Within the BOC there will be suffering and rejoicing and being one body in Christ we partake in both. (I Cor. 12:26)

As a result of being in the BOC we have peace in our hearts and can take comfort in the Lord while praying for each other: *"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."* (Col 3:15)

A family's  
**Love**  
In The  
Body

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Stamp

To:

**“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...” (Romans 3:24)**

## One Mind, One Body Glorifying God

**One mind:** Christ died, was buried, and rose, shedding His blood to pay for all your sin. (Rom. 1-5) If you believe this, God’s Spirit resides in and with you always. *“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” (1 Cor. 2:12)* As you and every saint read and believe sound doctrine, you develop the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:16) You’re conformed to His image as you walk by faith, yielding unto Him. *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren,” (Rom. 8:29)* We all can have this one mind.

**One Body:** It’s common to talk about having oneness: “Allow me to give you a hand,” “Can I lend an ear?” “Let’s put our heads together,” or “We have one heart on this.” Actually, this is an example of Body of Christ thinking: *“But now are they many members, yet one body.” (1 Cor. 12:20)* Do we really believe we’re one in the Body of Christ and members connected by Christ as our Head? (Eph. 1:22-23) Do we offer help to other dear saints or ask the Body for help when we really need it?

If one member, the left hand, is injured, the right compensates; functioning as one. *“And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.” (1 Cor. 12:26)* We are one Body!

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God has fully provided for us! *“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? (Rom. 8:32)* When challenges come, read the Word and pray, but also consider the resources He gave us in the Body of Christ to supply needs.

Each of us have an opportunity to glorify God in our bodies, with one mind, being here on His behalf. We’re His arms, legs, and mouth: *“That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.” (Rom. 15:6-7)* **Be a Resource to Others!**