



**Sunday November 10, 2019**  
**1 Corinthians chapters 12 and 13**

## **CHAPTER TWELVE**

Note: Much of the content in chapters 12-14 has been adapted from APC's free publication: "Gifts of the Holy Spirit". Please refer to this publication for additional information.

In chapter 11, the apostle Paul addressed two issues related to proper conduct in believers gatherings:

- head coverings (chapter 11:1-16)
- participating in the Lord's Supper (chapter 11:17-34)

Now in chapters 12-14, the apostle Paul teaches and clarifies the exercise of spiritual gifts and the different functions in the body, all of which are exercised during local church gatherings.

So 1 Corinthians chapters 12 to 14, which address the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, should be read and understood as instructions on how the gifts of the Spirit are exercised in the context of local church gatherings.

This however, does not imply that the gifts of the Spirit can only be manifested in local church gatherings, because the Holy Spirit is always present and can manifest Himself through the believer at anytime, anywhere as He wills.

### **Concerning Spiritual Gifts (12:1-11)**

- 1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:**
- 2 You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.**
- 3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.**
- 4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.**
- 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.**
- 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.**
- 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:**
- 8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,**
- 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,**
- 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.**



**11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.**

**vs 1:**

**Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:**

The word 'spiritual' (Greek '*pneumatikos*') means 'non-carnal', 'supernatural'. So we are talking about supernatural gifts. These are not gifts that are naturally acquired. For example, the gifts of healings are not that of a medical doctor. The gift of the word of wisdom is not that of having a lot of knowledge through earning a PhD degree. The gift of tongues is not the ability to learn and speak many languages. Paul is referring to supernatural gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit.

God wants us to know and understand these spiritual gifts.

**Vs 2:**

**You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.**

Paul reminds the Corinthian believers about their background that they came out of a life of idol worship. The emphasis here is on 'dumb' (meaning 'voiceless'). These idols did not speak or express themselves. In contrast we worship the living God who speaks, reveals, demonstrates and expresses Himself through the gifts of the Spirit.

**Vs 3:**

**Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.**

The Holy Spirit expresses Himself through people (believers). We know that the Holy Spirit is at work, because when a person speaks by the Holy Spirit, they will glorify and bless the Lord, and acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ. This is the first guideline in recognizing the expression of the Holy Spirit.

**Vs 4:**

**There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.**

The word 'gifts' in Greek is '*charisma*' and means a 'gift of grace'. The word '*charis*' means 'grace'.

There are varieties or different gifts given by the same Spirit.

The Spirit gives a variety (many, varied and different) gifts of grace.

The gifts of the Spirit are given freely by and because of His grace. It is not based on works we have done. We do not earn the gifts of the Spirit.

However we must not be ignorant of these gifts and we must learn how to exercise these gifts in order to serve people.



### **Vs 5:**

**There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.**

The word 'ministries' in Greek is '*diakonia*' meaning 'services', 'offices'.

There are many, varied, diverse and different ministries or offices given by the Lord Jesus.

Example: the ministry (service or office) of a teacher, pastor, deacon, apostle, prophet, intercessor, etc.

### **Vs 6:**

**And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.**

The word 'activities' in Greek is '*energēma*' meaning 'workings', 'outward manifestations', 'effects'. In the New Testament this word is always used with reference to supernatural working. There are many, varied, diverse and different expressions of divine energy through a believer resulting in different activities or outward manifestations.

We can understand verses 4-6 in two ways, both are correct: Same Spirit is the source of all of these different gifts of grace. Same Lord Jesus gives people different ministries (services, offices). Same Father God works through people in a variety of activities (or expressions, outward manifestations). Or, we can also look at these three verses as, same Spirit imparts a variety of gifts, empowers a variety of ministries and causes a variety of activities or things to take place through people.

### ***Gifts, ministries, operations : electrician, plumber, carpenter, auto-mechanic***

Consider an electrician, plumber, carpenter and an auto-mechanic. These are different administrations (services or ministries). Each of them has a tool box that has a screw driver, a hammer, etc. We liken the tool-box to the gifts of the Holy Spirit we are currently studying. However, what each one accomplishes with the same tool (e.g. screwdriver) will vary. The carpenter uses the screwdriver to get screws into wood, the electrician may tighten electrical parts together with the screwdriver, and so on. These are the various operations, activities or expressions of divine power through the same gifts via these respective ministries. Hence the same gifts of the Spirit can be expressed in different ways through various ministries in the Body of Christ. But it is the same God who is the Source, who is being served and whose power is being manifested through all these ministries in the Body.



### **Vs 7:**

**But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:**

The gifts of grace spoken of in verse 4, are also referred to as the manifestation of the Spirit, meaning the making visible of the Spirit's presence and power. These are given to "each one", that is to every believer for the benefit of all. Every believer can have the gifts of the Spirit (or manifestations of the Spirit) released through him or her.

### **Vs 8-10:**

**8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,**

**9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,**

**10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.**

In a local church gathering, when believers meet for fellowship, the Spirit of God manifests Himself in different ways through each person present. There are nine gifts of the Spirit listed here.

For additional information on the exercise of these gifts, please see APC's free publication: "The Gifts of the Holy Spirit". Also, please attend our Weekend Schools for training and equipping on the exercise of these spiritual gifts.

### **Vs 11:**

**But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.**

*'But one and the same Spirit works all these things'*, implying that all the gifts of the Spirit are operated by the same Holy Spirit. Therefore, the gifts don't belong to the believer, but to the Holy Spirit. This also means, that all nine of the gifts can be operated through a believer, because it is the Holy Spirit who has all nine and operates all nine, through the believer.

*'distributing to each one individually'*, implying that any (one or more or all) of these nine gifts can be released through each one, that is every believer at a given gathering. *'as He wills'*, the Holy Spirit releases these gifts as He chooses. However, as Paul addresses later, we have our part to play to 'desire' and know how to correctly express these gifts. So the manifestations of the Spirit, (the gifts of the Spirit) are a collaborative work. We work with the Holy Spirit to manifest the gifts. He wills, but we must also be willing, cooperating, desiring, have faith and must properly release the gifts.



## **Functions In The Body (12:12-27)**

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 Paul then addresses the individual role, place and function that each believer has in the Body of Christ. He draws a comparison with the physical body and the Body of Christ. Keep in mind that the local church is the physical expression of the Body of Christ.

### **1 Corinthians 12:12-27**

**12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.**

**13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.**

**14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.**

**15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?**

**16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?**

**17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling?**

**18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.**

**19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be?**

**20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.**

**21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."**

**22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.**

**23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty,**

**24 but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it,**

**25 that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.**

**26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.**

**27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.**

Note: The section below is adapted from APC's free publication: "The House of God".

A, The Body has many members (12:12,14)

We are different in terms of role and function in the Body. We are not all same.

B, Each one of us is a member of the Body (12:27)

None of us is 'not needed'.

C, We are not independent. We need each other (12:15,16)



D, There are diverse functions in the Body (12:17)

All of us don't have the same function. Lets learn to appreciate and celebrate each one's gifting and function.

E, God has placed each one where He saw it best for us and as He was pleased (12:18)

Lets recognize our place and enjoy whatever role and function Christ has given us. Let us not be envious of somebody else's gift, role and function.

F, It takes many of us - all of us - to make up the whole (12:19,20)

Understand that the Body is not complete without all of us. We are an important part of the local church body. Hence we need to stay connected and we must contribute to the body.

G, We can never claim independence (12:21)

Recognize that others have been placed around you to give into your life and you have been placed around them to give into their lives. I need others, and others need me.

H, God gives greater honor to what seems to have less honor (12:22-24)

What seems weaker, is actually necessary and hence is very important. What seems hidden, actually receives greater honor and hence must not be treated lightly.

I, God does not want any division/strife in His Body, but that we demonstrate mutual love and care for one another (12:25-26)

### **Gifts And Functions**

We need to point out that in 1 Corinthians 12:8-11, the apostle Paul listed nine gifts of the Spirit. In this section 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, the apostle Paul talks about the functions (role or ministry) that each believer has in the Body.

The gifts of the Spirit along with "grace gifts" or what we refer to as "membership gifts" enable the believer to fulfill his or her function (role, ministry, area of service) in the Body.

There are nine gifts of the Spirit, but there are limitless "membership gifts" and limitless functions (role, ministry, or area of service) in the Body.

Before we explain 1 Corinthians 12:28-30 let us briefly understand the three categories of spiritual gifts we see in the New Testament.



## Gifts Of The Spirit, Membership Gifts And Ministry Gifts

### GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

1 Corinthians 12:7-11

All nine gifts of the Spirit available to all believers.

### MEMBERSHIP GIFTS

Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, Ephesians 4:7, 1 Peter 4:10-11

All believers have one or more membership gifts (also called grace gifts).

However, we all have different membership gifts, depending on our function in the Body.

Example: Leadership, Giving, Showing mercy, etc. etc.

### MINISTRY GIFTS

Ephesians 4:11

Gifts of Christ given to certain (some) individuals.

There are five: apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, evangelist.



The gifts of the Holy Spirit, the membership gifts and (if given) the ministry gift(s) all together define and help the believer fulfill his/her FUNCTION in the Body of Christ.

## Different Ministry Functions (12:28-30)

1 Corinthians 12:28-30



**28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.**

**29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?**

**30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?**

### **12:28**

*'has appointed'* meaning, to put in place for His own use.

*'these'* in KJV 'some', implying specific people, not everyone.

*'first'* (Greek 'proton') meaning first in time or place, or first in rank, influence, honor.

God has put some people in these places (roles or functions) giving them their place, rank, influence and honor.

*'helps'* referring to those who render any kind of aid, assistance, service or help; helpers.

*'administrations'* in KJV 'governments', meaning 'to govern' or 'rule' and is usually applied to the one steering a ship.

The apostle Paul lists an assortment of Ministry gifts (apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healings) and Membership gifts (helps, administrations, varieties of tongues), and hence clearly indicates that not all members have the same Ministry or Membership gifts.

Ministry gifts (apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healings). We see 'miracles' and 'gifts of healings' representative of the evangelist.

Membership gifts (helps, administrations, varieties of tongues). The 'varieties of tongues' represents believers who have membership function that regularly expresses 'varieties of tongues' e.g. intercessors, those who bring public messages in tongues.

Hence, the answer to each of the rhetorical questions in verses 30 and 31 is 'no', since Paul is addressing ministry gifts and membership function gifts, and not specifically the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

### **1 Corinthians 12:31**

**But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.**

Having given us understanding on the gifts of the Spirit and the believers function in the Body, Paul gets back to teaching on the gifts of the Spirit. We are to earnestly desire the best gifts, and also simultaneously walk the way of love.

One way to understand the 'best gifts' is that the best gift(s) are the gifts best suited for the occasion to meet the need of the people being ministered to. Generally speaking for





a person needing healing, the best gift would be the gifts of healings, workings of miracles and faith. Similarly, for a person feeling discouraged not having any illness, prophecy would be the best gift.

**But earnestly desire...**

God wants us to desire these spiritual gifts.

## **CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

### **The More Excellent Way**

**1 Corinthians 12:31**

**But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.**

**1 Corinthians 13:1-13**

**1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.**

**2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.**

**3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.**

**4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;**

**5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;**

**6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;**

**7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.**

**8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.**

**9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part.**

**10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.**

**11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away 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 just as I also am known.**

**13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.**

**1 Corinthians 14:1**

**Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.**

After the apostle Paul explains about the gifts of the Spirit and membership functions (leading, teaching, administration, etc. etc.) in the Body in 1 Corinthians 12, he encourages us to desire these gifts, but states that he would like to point us to "a more excellent way" or a way that is even better or far superior. The implication here is an even better way to minister to people and serve the Body of Christ - a way that is better



than the gifts of the Spirit and exercising membership functions. He points us to walking in the God-kind of love for people.

Paul explains in the first part of 1 Corinthians 13 that if we exercise the gifts of the Spirit, membership functions and do great charitable deeds even to the point of offering our body to be burned, without being motivated and guided by the God-kind of love - all this is empty, is nothing and has no benefit! This shows the importance of abiding in love when serving and ministering.

Whatever we do we must be governed, guided and motivated by the God-kind of love. Do it out of love and because of love for people. As Paul explains in versus 4-8 if we are impatient, unkind, jealous, boastful, proud, behaving rudely, self-seeking, self-promoting, self-centered, irritable, angered, have evil thought or intent, promoting iniquity or untruth, then we are not being governed, guided and motivated by love. The exercise of the gifts of the Spirit with improper motivation means nothing, is empty and brings no benefit.

The reason love is superior to the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, ministry functions, charitable deeds and to faith and hope is because love is enduring. There will come a time when the only thing that will still be in operation is love - all the others will be done away with, no longer in use. [Note: in verse 8, in the context of prophecies ("prophecies, they will fail;") and knowledge ("knowledge, it will vanish away") the same Greek work "katargeo" is translated "they will fail" and "it will vanish away". The meaning is that these gifts will no longer be in use, reduced to inactivity.]

This is not to say that we should not exercise the gifts of the Spirit or our membership functions. Having got our priority right to walk in love, then we pursue the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit and membership functions as Paul sums things up in 1 Corinthians 14:1 "*Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.*"

Remember, faith works through love (Galatians 5:6). Without love faith breaks down. We can go through the mechanics of exercising faith, but faith does not produce when there is no love. Maintain a heart of genuine love for people. The Holy Spirit is the One who floods our hearts with the love of God (Romans 5:5). So yield to Him. Let the love of Christ for the people you serve, motivate, inspire and propel you into action (2 Corinthians 5:14).

The love of God must motivate, guide and govern the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, so that it can result in genuine edification of people and bring glory to Jesus Christ.

#### **MINISTRY TIME | SALVATION CALL**



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

**Sunday November 10, 2019**  
**1 Corinthians chapters 12 and 13**

The is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

**Preparation**

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at [apcwo.org/sermons](http://apcwo.org/sermons) . Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

**Welcome**

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship and a fun activity.

**LISTEN to God's Word**

Read the following Scripture passages: *1 Corinthians chapters 12 & 13*

**INVESTIGATE God's Word Together**

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

*1, The gifts of the Spirit are like a tool box available for all believers. Additionally, every believer has their own set (mix) of membership gifts given to them. By exercising the gifts of the Spirit and their membership gifts, believers are able to fulfill their FUNCTION in the body of Christ. (A) At this point, what you see to be your function in the body of Christ? (B)What are some membership gifts you see evident in you that help you fulfill your function?*

*2, Discuss why it is important to exercise the gifts of the Spirit in love?*

*3, Is the apostle Paul teaching that we can choose between walking in love and the gifts of the Spirit, or should a believer have both - walk in love and desire spiritual gifts? If so, how do we give equal emphasis to both?*



If time permits, each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

**FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey**

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

**ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another**

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

*1, families to be protected and strengthened*

*2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.*

*3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.*

Close by thanking God together.