

## 1 Corinthians Study 18

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

### KEY VERSE—

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.” (12:7)

### SUMMARY—

In this section, Paul addresses some of their questions concerning spiritual gifts (12:1-14:40). In summary, he insists on order when using these gifts, not the division and confusion which they are exhibiting (14:33,40). He speaks of the source of these gifts (12:1-11) and the unity which should characterize the body (church), even though exhibiting a great diversity of gifts (12:12-31). The greatest gift of all was love, and if these spiritual gifts were resulting in division and jealousy, then they were sacrificing the greater gift for the lesser (13:1-7). Besides, these spiritual gifts were temporary, whereas the greater gifts—faith, hope, love—were permanent (13:8-13). Then he encouraged them to pursue the greater of the spiritual gifts, rather than coveting the lesser—albeit more exciting—gift of tongues (14:1-19). Besides, tongues were for the benefit of unbelievers, not believers (14:20-25). Finally, if there is no order in their assemblies, then they were abusing God’s gifts (14:26-40).

### QUESTIONS—

- 1) What has been one of the great problems in the Corinthian church, which is further illustrated in this section (12:25; cf. 1:10)?
- 2) What had the Corinthians specifically asked for instructions about (12:1)? What other things had they specifically asked about (7:1,25; 8:1; 16:1)?
- 3) Religiously, what had the majority of the Corinthians previously been (12:2; cf. Acts 18:4-11)?
- 4) What is the contrast Paul is going to make between “dumb idols” (12:2; cf. Psalm 115:5-7; 135:16) and “speaking by the Spirit of God” (12:3)?

5) How could they know whether the oracles of other gods and idols came from God (12:3)? In this context, who is saying “Jesus is accursed” and “Jesus is Lord” (12:3)?

6) Even though there are diversities and differences in all of these gifts, what remains consistent (12:4-6)?

7) If the separate members of the Godhead worked together in concert, to bring these gifts to the Corinthians (12:4-6), then how were these gifts not intended to be used?

8) Notice the three different words used to describe these spiritual gifts. What does each word emphasize about these manifestations of the Spirit?

⇒ “Gifts” (12:4)?

⇒ “Ministries” (12:5)?

⇒ “Activities” (12:6)?

9) What was the purpose of these spiritual gifts (12:7,11)?

10) Why was there no reason to boast in regard to the spiritual gifts which certain ones had— from where had they received the gift (12:7,11; cf. 4:7)?

11) Describe each of these spiritual gifts, and explain what benefit they would be and how they might be used in the first century church:

⇒ “Word of wisdom” (12:8)—

⇒ “Word of knowledge” (12:8)—

⇒ “Faith” (12:9)—

⇒ “Gifts of healing” (12:9)—

⇒ “Working of miracles” (12:10)—

⇒ “Prophecy” (12:10)—

⇒ “Discerning of spirits” (12:10)—

⇒ “Different kinds of tongues” (12:10)—

⇒ “Interpretation of tongues” (12:10)—

[For some examples of the use of these particular gifts see the following passages—wisdom (Exodus 31:1-6; 35:30-36:2), knowledge (Matthew 10:18-20), faith (Matthew 17:14-20; 21:21;

Acts 3:16), gifts of healing (Acts 4:30; James 5:14-15), working of miracles (Acts 13:9-11), prophecy (Acts 13:1-3; Ephesians 4:11), discerning of spirits (14:29; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21; 1 John 4:1), different kinds of tongues (Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4,6,8,11), interpretation of tongues (14:13,26-28)]

12) Did the Corinthians obtain whatever spiritual gifts they received based on their own merits or spirituality (12:11)? Who determined which gift they received? Did all of them receive gifts from the Spirit (12:29-30)?