# Contemporary Theological Issues

*(Course taught by Pastor Vincent Sawyer)*

# Index of Subjects Covered

1. Random Evolution vs Six Day Creationism . . . . . 3

2. Non-Orthodox Theory (Neotheism) . . . . . 14

3. The Gender of Church Leadership . . . . . 18

4. The Error of Racial Supremacy . . . . . 26

5. Biblical Dispensationalism . . . . . 42

6 Bible Answers to the Charismatic Movement:
An Expositional Study of I Corinthians 12-14 . . . . . 68

# 1. Random Evolution vs Six Day Creationism

## What Has God Revealed about the Origins of Life?

Question: Who should know more about the product, the consumer or the manufacturer? Obviously the one who makes something should have more knowledge about the thing made. The Christian's Worldview holds that God is the maker of all things. Therefore He has answers for the Creation He Produced.

In the early days of the automobile, a man's Model-T Ford stalled in the middle of the road. He couldn't get it started no matter how hard he cranked nor how much he tried to advance the spark or adjust things under the hood. Just then a chauffeured limousine pulled up behind him, and a wiry, energetic man stepped out from the back seat and offered his assistance. After tinkering for a few moments, the stranger said, "Now try it!" Immediately the engine leaped to life. The well-dressed individual then identified himself as Henry Ford. "I designed and built these cars," he said, "so I know what to do when something goes wrong." God, as our Creator, knows how to "fix" us when our lives are broken by sin. He knows all about us because He made us and is in sovereign control of life. The One who made us knows more about us than we know about ourselves. Therefore, it behooves us to see life through His perspective.

The Christian Worldview holds that there are realities that exist outside of the perceptivity of the five senses. There is a non-visible Spirit realm that exists. We would not know this reality apart from Divine Revelation.

There is past History regarding origins of life recorded in Scripture

The word "Genesis" means: Beginnings. The Book of Genesis Records for us the Beginnings of God's Creation. It shows how Creation had it's origination.

Genesis 1:1 - ***In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.**

Genesis, a book inspired by God (II Tim. 3:16) and written through Moses, is the first book of the Hebrew Torah (Law) and is titled by the first word in the book - *"Bereshith."*

It is the first of five books called in Greek "The *Pentateuch."*

The English Word "Genesis" is derived from the Greek Septuagint's title for this book. In Hebrew, its title *"Bereshith"* (from the first word) means origin or beginnings. So "Genesis" means beginnings or origin.

This is an appropriate title since this book records the beginnings of the entire physical universe.

Genesis gives us an accurate understanding of how. . .

--the world began (an understanding which eludes the minds of the proud, humanistic, so-called agnostics and atheists)
--mankind began
--the family began (through Adam and Eve)
--sin began (in the Garden of Eden)
--government began (through Noah - Gen. 9:6)
--the world's nations began (through Shem, Ham, and Japheth)
--the Jewish nation began (through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob)

An understanding of Genesis is foundational to all theology and doctrinal understanding. The rest of the Bible builds on the historical facts presented in this book.

It is also clear that the Lord Jesus Christ viewed the Genesis account of Creation as being historically accurate and authoritative (Matthew 19:4,8; Mark 10:6; Cp. Mark 12:26). Therefore, to reject the Genesis account is to reject the teaching and credibility of Christ.
The Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 11:3, 1 Tim. 2:13) and the Apostle Peter (2 Pet. 3:3-7) also viewed Genesis as historically accurate and authoritative.

In Genesis 1:1 "It is no accident that God is the subject of the first sentence of the Bible." (Derek Kidner, Genesis, p. 43).

God is the focus of the entire Bible.

In Gen. 1:1, God does not prove Himself; He asserts Himself. He does not argue for His existence; rather, He bolding states it.

This is instructive to us regarding our apologetic (defense of the faith). We don't need to prove the existence of God to anyone. God's creation does a good enough job of that (Ps. 19:1; Rom. 1:20).

Verse one summarizes the whole chapter. God made everything.

Gen.1:1
"Baresheet bara elohim at hashamayim wat ha-aretz"
***In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.**

## A. *Genesis 1:1 teaches us that…*
## There is a POINT at which TIME BEGAN

**"The beginning" -** Not the beginning of eternity; nor the beginning of the abode of God (the "third heaven" - II Cor. 12:2), but the beginning of the physical universe (the earth's globe, the sky, and outer space).

The beginning of the five basic scientific realities (in a physical universe) are mentioned in Gen. 1:1-2 -

1. Time = In the beginning
2. Space = The heavens
3. Matter = The earth
4. Force = The Spirit of God
5. Motion = moved

(F.H. Capron, cited by Thomas, p. 31)

Until God spoke creation into existence, nothing existed.

We are today living in a "bubble" of time which had its beginning in Gen. 1:1.

Although the eternal God is <u>not</u> bound by time ("One day is as a thousand years"), He has chosen to create time, and to allow His temporal creation to exist during a limited time frame. After the Millenium, time shall be no more, the former things shall pass away and eternity future will continue.

## B. *Genesis 1:1 teaches us that…*

## God is AWESOME in His essence, power & wisdom

Elohim is the only name used for God in Gen. 1. This name, used over 2500 times in the Old Testament, refers to God as the "Strong One," the mighty God.

The word Elohim is a plural name. This is significant.

**All things were created by the <u>Triune Godhead</u>**

(The Trinity was involved in creation)

Evidence:

a. Plural pronouns - Genesis 1:26 - "Let <u>us</u> make man in <u>our</u> image." Cp. verse 27 - "So <u>God</u> created man in his own image."

b. Man was created:

1) By the <u>Father</u>

- *Rev. 4:11 - Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.)*

2) By the <u>Son</u>

- *John 1:1-3 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

- *Col. 1:15-16 - Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

- *Heb. 1:2 - Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*

3) By the Spirit
   - *Psalm 104:30 - Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.*
   - *Job 33:4 - The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*
   - *cp. Gen. 2:7 - "breathed" and "breath" = "ruach," which can be translated "Spirit")*

"The verb used for create (*bara*) is used in Scripture exclusively for the activity of God. Humans may "make" (*asa*), "form" (*yasar*), or "build" (*bana*); to the Hebrew, however, God creates." (Allen P. Ross, Creation and Blessing, p. 106).

**God created the world out of nothing**

("Exnihilo" - i.e. without pre-existing materials)

***"Created"*** - The Hebrew word "barah" (Gen. 1:1; 1:27; 2:3; 5:2) "refers to a sudden, supernatural, bringing into existence of something that previously did not exist" (John Whitcomb).

Other Scriptural Evidence:

a. Hebrews 11:3 -Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.
b. Psalm 33:6 -By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.
c. The repeated phrase--"And God said. . . and it was so"--indicates that the act of creation took place by the instantaneous power of the word of God (Gen. 1:6-7; 9, 11, 24, etc.)

For God to create such a vast, and yet detailed, balanced and beautiful universe, He must be awesome. His power made it all, and His wisdom made it all just right.

**C.** ***Genesis 1:1 teaches us that…***

## Life has DESIGN & PURPOSE

Creation reflects well-thought-out design; it's too well-arranged to be a freak of nature or happenstance.
Since a personal God made the world and everything in it, life has meaning. There is purpose to life. Life has a goal.

What a meaningless life this would be, if there was no intelligent, loving, powerful creator (who planned and made it all).

The fool who says in his heart "there is no God," really has no purpose in life and no meaning to life (since in his mind life is an accident).

Life is empty for the atheist and agnostic. Such people cannot be truly at peace in themselves, because there are paramount, fundamental questions which have not been answered in their minds. (Who am I? How did I get here? Why am I here? And Where am I going?)

People often turn to drugs or other substance abuse or decide to end it all in suicide because their lives are void of purpose and meaning (you'll never meet a truly happy person who denies God's existence).

**D.** ***Genesis 1:1 teaches us that…***

## Creation did not CREATE ITSELF (Evolution is a lie)

**"The Heaven" -** lit. the heavens (hashamim - plural). Referring to the sky surrounding the earth (the atmosphere) and outer space (the galaxies).

**"The earth" -** the globe of the world with its capacity to sustain life.

**The Theory of Evolution**

a. The definition of evolution: The word "evolution" describes a process of continuous change from a lower, simpler, or worse state to a higher, more complex, or better state. (Webster's Dictionary)

The evolution of man involves a supposed "process by which, through some sort of aggregation of matter though many ages and countless species, by chance or by some undetected, impersonal law, man appears."

b. The hypothesis of evolution: The evolutionist believes that life evolved in this way:

1) From nothing to something

2) From inorganic to organic

3) From plant life to animal life

4) From animal life to man

c. The flaws of evolution:

**1) Evolution is actually unscientific.**

True science is the discovery of facts (laws or principles) based on the "collection of data through observation and experiment."
One species forming into another has never been observed (seen by man), nor has it been produced in a lab.

Therefore, evolution is not fact, but faith. A blind faith based on assumptions which cannot be proven.

Everyone believes in something. No one can endure the stress and cares of life without faith in something that cannot ultimately be proven.
Atheists cannot prove there is no God.
Pantheists cannot prove that everything is God.
Pragmatists cannot prove that what will count for them in the future is what works for them now.
Nor can agnostics prove that it is impossible to know one way or the other.
Faith is unavoidable, even if we choose to believe only in ourselves. What is to be decided is what evidence we think is pertinent, how we are going to interpret that evidence, and who or what we are willing to believe in (Luke 16:16).
Each of us has a choice. We can look at the evidence for God's existence and believe that He is there, or we can set aside the evidence and decide that there is no God. Either way, we must cross a bridge of faith, because neither argument can present laboratory verification.
The Limitations of Science
---
©1995 RBC Ministries--Grand Rapids, MI 49555

**2) Evolution has no valid answer for the origination of matter.**
What started the "Big Bang?" Where did the original substance from which "life evolved" come from?

**3) Evolution contradicts the first and second Laws of Thermodynamics.**

a) The first Law of Thermodynamics notes that in all real processes, the total quantity of matter and/or energy stays constant, even though it frequently changes form (EX: ice to water, rock to sand, etc.). This law proves that nothing is being either "created" or "evolved" by the present processes.

b) The second Law of Thermodynamics (one of the best-proven laws of science) says that the whole universe is running down into complete disorder. The universe is not improving nor become more complex nor gaining higher organization with time, but rather is deteriorating with time, becoming less ordered, leading toward entropy (an inferior change of energy and matter)

Ps 102:25-27
Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.
They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:
(KJV)

The second law states hat when energy is transformed from one state to another, some of it is turned into heat energy which cannot be converted back into useful forms. This indicates hat the universe is deteriorating.

Example: The sun and stars irretrievably emit millions of tons of energy every day, and given enough time would eventually burn out of existence.

The amount of helium-4 in the atmosphere suggests that our atmosphere is less than 15,000 years old. Approximately fifteen million tons of nickel meteorite dust settle o earth each year. If he earth is five billion years old, then there should be a layer of dust at least 200 feet thick, but there isn't.

**4) Evolution contradicts known biological facts.**

a) Through "mutations" no new life form has ever evolved.
b) The chromosome count in plants and animals and humans is totally distinct.
c) The distinct DNA in life forms prevents them from evolving into a new species (like begets only like).

**5) Evolution has no proof of intermediate species ("missing links")**

The link or bridge between inorganic and organic, between plant life and animal life, and between animal life and man has never been scientifically proven. (EX: There is no valid link between man and ape)

**6) Evolution is statistically impossible.**

> The French Mathematician, Lecompte de Nouy, examined the laws of probability for a single molecule of high dissymmetry to be formed by the action of chance. De Nouy found that, on an average, the time needed to form one such molecule of our terrestrial globe would be about 10 to the 253 power billions of years.
> "But," continued de Nouy ironically, "let us admit that no matter how small the chance it could happen, one molecule could be created by such astronomical odds of chance. However, one molecule is of no use. Hundreds of millions of identical ones are necessary. Thus we either admit the miracle or doubt the absolute truth of science." Quoted in; "Is Science Moving Toward Belief in God?" Paul A. Fisher, The Wanderer, (Nov 7, 1985),
> cited in Kingdoms In Conflict, C. Colson, p. 66

The statistical probability that the complex and ordered universe would result from chance processes, ungoverned by a personal intelligent, deliberate Designer, is virtually nil.

"The statistical probability of the ordered cosmos resulting from spontaneous generation (evolution) is considerably less than the probability that an explosion in a print shop would produce a dictionary."

For the sun to be just far enough from the earth that it doesn't burn up and close enough that it doesn't freeze up is too precise a distance to be mere chance (or an accident).

**7) Evolution contradicts <u>common sense</u>.**

To believe it was by <u>chance</u> or by <u>accident</u> that a detailed, aesthetic (beautiful), vast, and orderly universe came into existence is irrational.

> While that seems hard to believe, it makes great sense when compared with the alternative. If indeed the worlds were not made by God out of nothing, then the next-best solution is that the worlds were made by no one out of nothing. Compare the two ideas for reasonableness and see which conclusion you come to.
>
> It is absurd for the Evolutionist to complain that it is unthinkable for an admittedly unthinkable God to make everything out of nothing, and then pretend that it is more thinkable that nothing should turn itself into anything.
> --G.K. Chesterton in The Quotable Chesterton

Note: At the present rate at which the world's population is increasing, if mankind has been in existence as long as the evolutionists claim, the world would be over-filled with people.

**8) Evolution contradicts the clear statement of <u>Scripture</u> about origins.**

a) Genesis 1-2 -

b) Matthew 19:4 -And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female

c) Hebrews 11:3 -Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

d) Evolution contradicts the Biblical principle that plants and animals only produce "<u>after their kind</u>" (Gen. 1:11, 12, 21, 24, 25). This truth, though written thousands of years ago, is scientifically validated today!

**The motive of evolution**

Evolution is Satanic:

> Satan represents man as just another animal, sometimes better, more often worse than those that walk on all-fours, who, because of his "divine spiritual and intellectual development," has become the most vicious animal of all!"
> Anton Szandor LaVey, "The Satanic Bible", p. 25, 33

What caused man to think up such a theory?

Basic answer: Sinful man does not want to be accountable to a Creator God.

Fallen man wants to make a way to leave God out of the origin of life, so that he does not have to acknowledge the Creator's authority and glorify Him. Evolution is so readily accepted simply because it gives man the "luxury" of keeping the concept of God out of his life and conscience (Jn. 3:19-20 - *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved*).

See: Romans 1:18-32 -

1) The real reason for evolution - V. 18 - "Men hold (hold down, suppress) the truth in unrighteousness."

2) The inexcusableness of evolution - V. 19-20 - Creation clearly points to a Creator (and His power and authority).

3) The end result of evolution - V. 21-32

   a) Empty lives and blind eyes (v. 21)

   b) Pride and delusion (v. 22)

   c) Idolatry (materialism) (v. 27)

   d) Immorality (v. 24-32)

If there is no God, then there are:

(1) No absolutes
(No definite right and wrongs; Issues are not black & white; All things are relative to situations and circumstances; No such thing as truth)

(2) No moral standards
(There would be nothing by which to measure rightness; Man can set his own rules, and play the game of life any way he wants; Situation ethics becomes the rule )

(3) No boundaries
(Nothing is off limits; nothing is sacred ground; No act is a transgression)

(4) No shame or embarrassment for sin
(If there are no definite rights & wrongs, there should be no feelings of guilt, no matter what you do)

(5) No fear of judgment
(If there is no Creator God, man is accountable to no one; He can live anyway he wants without the fear of consequences)

(6) No need of salvation
"It becomes clear now that the whole justification of Jesus' life and death is predicated on the existence of Adam and the forbidden fruit he and Eve ate. Without the original sin, who needs to be redeemed? Without Adams fall into a life of constant sin terminated by death, what purpose is there to Christianity? None."
G. Richard Bozarth, "The Meaning of Evolution", American Atheist, 20 Sept. 1979, p. 30

## E. *Genesis 1:1 teaches us that…*

## Man is RESPONSIBLE to Glorify the Creator

***Psalm 100:3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.***

If a Creator exists, these are some of the resultant consequences:

1) I am known by the Creator.
2) I am inferior to the superior Creator.
3) I am responsible to the Creator.
4) I will be judged (held accountable) by the Creator.
5) I should live for the glory and purpose of the Creator.
6) I am not the master of my life.
*Therefore, I cannot live any way I please; I must do His will.*

Concluding Application: If God made it all, God has power over all, authority over all, sovereignty over all, dominance over all, and preeminence over all. If God be God, then He is to be feared and obeyed. We have no choice but to do what He wills, and to surrender our lives to Him.

# 2. Non-Orthodox Theory (Neotheism)

(by Dr. David Burggraff)

The question of the nature of God's foreknowledge and how that relates to human freedom has been pondered and debated by Christian theologians at least since the time of Augustine. And the issue will not go away. More recently, the terms of the debate have shifted, and the issue has taken on new urgency with the theological proposal known as the openness of God. This view maintains that God's knowledge, while perfect, is limited regarding the future inasmuch as the future is "open" and not settled.

In fact, this view claims to be orthodox but zealously desires to make major changes in the classical theistic view. Several proponents of this view, including Clark Pinnock, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Basinger, have collaborated on a volume titled *The Openness of God*.[1] Other Christian thinkers share similar views or have expressed sympathy for this position, including Greg Boyd, Stephen Davis, Thomas Morris, and Richard Swinburne.[2]

Neotheists have variously labeled their view "openness of God" or "free will theism." Others have called this new form of theism a form of process theology or panentheism because of its important similarities to this position.[3] Yet it seems more appropriate to call it *neotheism* for several reasons. First, it has significant differences from the panentheism of Alfred North Whitehead, Charles Hartshorn, and company.[4] Neotheism, like classical theism, affirms many of the essential attributes of God, including infinity, necessity, ontological independence, transcendence, omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence. Likewise, it shares with traditional theism the belief in ex nihilo creation and direct divine supernatural intervention in the world. Since process theology denies all these, it is unfair to list neotheism as a subspecies of that view.

---

[1]Clark Pinnock, et al., *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994).

[2]Those who have written books include Clark Pinnock, *Most Moved Mover: A Theology of Openness* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001); Richard Rice, *God's Foreknowledge and Man's Free Will* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1985); Ronald Nash, ed., *Process Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1987); Greg Boyd, *Trinity and Process* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992) and *Letters from a Skeptic* (Colorado Springs: Victor Books, 1994); Greg Boyd, *God of the Impossible: A Biblical Introduction to the Open View of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000); J. R. Lucas, *The Freedom of the Will* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970) and *The Future: An Essay on God, Temporality and Truth* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1989); Peter Geach, *Providence and Evil* (Cambridge: University Press, 1977); and Richard Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977). Thomas V. Morris, *Our Idea of God: An Introduction to Philosophical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991), is close to the view. A. N. Prior, Richard Purtill, and others have written articles defending neotheism. Still others show sympathy to the view, such as Stephen T. Davis, *Logic and the Nature of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983) and Linda Zagzebski, *The Dilemma of Freedom and Foreknowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

[3]Clark Pinnock, "Between Classical and Process Theism," in Nash; William Hasker, *God, Time and Knowledge* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989); David and Randall Basinger, eds., *Predestination and Free Will* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986).

[4]See Norman L. Geisler and William D. Watkins, *Worlds Apart: A Handbook of World Views* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989).

On the other hand, since significant differences exist between the new theism and classical theism, neither does neotheism fit comfortably in the latter category. For example, neotheism denies God's foreknowledge of future free acts and, as a consequence, God's complete sovereignty over human events. These deviations from two millennia of Christian theology are serious enough to deserve another name, as well as to arouse concern. It seems appropriate, then, to call it *neotheism*.

One proponent, Clark Pinnock, correctly positioned neotheism in titling his chapter in *Process Theology* "Between Classical and Process Theism." Whatever it is called, this view is a serious challenge to classical theism and a serious threat to many important doctrines and practices built on that view.[5] Since they desire to be members of the orthodox theistic camp, they have understandably cast their view in that direction.[6]

## I. Characteristics of Neotheism

As the new kid on the block, neotheism desires to make itself clear, distinct, and appealing. Proponents list five characteristics of their position"

A. God not only created this world ex nihilo but can (and at times does) intervene unilaterally in earthly affairs.

B. God chose to create us with incompatibilistic (libertarian)[7] freedom – freedom over which he cannot exercise total control.

---

[5]The issue of neotheism is dividing evangelical scholars as to its orthodoxy concerning whether God knows the future. At the 2001 meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Colorado Springs the Friday before Thanksgiving, the ETS passed a simple resolution affirming God's foreknowledge. "We believe the Bible clearly teaches that God has complete, accurate, and infallible knowledge of all future decisions and actions of free moral agents," the statement read. The resolution passed 253 to 66, with 41 members sustaining. This reaffirmation of traditional belief was provoked by a decade-long discussion of open-theism in ETS. Many members of ETS believe open theism contradicts the society's commitment to the inerrancy of the Scriptures, the sole point of the organization's original doctrinal basis.

[6]A recent publication debates the similarities and differences between classical and neotheistic views. James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy, editors, *Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001) with contributions by Greg Boyd (of Bethel College: open-theism view), David Hunt (of Whittier College: simple-foreknowledge view), William Lane Craig (of Talbot School of Theology: middle-knowledge view), and Paul Helm (of Regent College, Vancouver: Augustinian-Calvinist view).

[7]By the "libertarian" or "incompatibilistic" view of free will they mean "an agent" is free with respect to a given action at a given time if at that time "it is within the agent's power to perform the action and also in the agent's power to refrain from the action" (Pinnock, et al., 136-37). By the "compatibilist" view of free will they mean "an agent if free with respect to a given action at a given time if at that time it is true that the agent can perform the action if she decides to perform it and she can refrain from the action if she decides not to perform it" (137). As they observe, "the difference between the two definitions may not be immediately apparent." The main distinction is that on a libertarian view, for free will to exist one must have both "inner freedom" (no overwhelming desire to the contrary) and "outer freedom" (no external restraints); on the compatibilist's view only "outer freedom to carry out the decision either way she makes it" is necessary, even if "the decision itself may be completely determined by the psychological forces at work in her personality" (ibid.).

C. God so values freedom – the moral integrity of free creatures and a world in which such integrity is possible – that he does not normally override such freedom, even if he sees that it is producing undersirable results.

D. God always desires our highest good, both individually and corporately, and thus is affected by what happens in our lives.

E. God does not possess exhaustive knowledge of exactly how we will utilize our freedom, although he may very well at times be able to predict with great accuracy the choices we will freely make.[8]

## II. Inconsistencies of Neotheism

Neotheism is a form of theism, and should not be ranked as a heresy. Nevertheless, it is a significant doctrinal departure from the traditional theism underlying historic orthodoxy. As such it deserves analysis. Granting what neotheists believe God, neotheism is inconsistent. Moreover, it is an unnecessary aberration: the classical theistic view of God can be logically derived from the premises of neotheism, and the central desire of neotheists for an interactive God is possible without giving up the classical theistic view of God. These are just some the problems with neotheism that are readily apparent. But what are the theological consequences of neotheism? There are several theological consequences if one hold to neotheism:

A. Predictive prophecies would be fallible.

Illus.: If all predictive prophecy involving free choices is conditional, then the Bible could not have predicted where Jesus would be born (Mic. 5:2), as He was. Indeed, the Bible also predicted when He would die (Dan. 9:25-27), and how He would rise from the dead (Ps. 16:10 cf. Acts 2:30-31). Either these predictions are infallible or else they were just guesses on God's part. If they are infallible, then neotheism is wrong, since according to their view God cannot make infallible predictions. On the other hand, if it is not infallible, then God was just guessing.

B. It undermines the test for false prophecy.

If all prophecy is conditional, then there cannot be any such thing as a false prophecy. The OT, however, lays down tests for false prophets (Deut. 18:22).

[8]Ibid., 156.

C. It undermines the infallibility of the Bible.

Not only does the neotheist's denial that God knows the outcome of future free acts diminish (or deny) God's omniscience and omnipotence, but ita also entails a denial of the infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible, which some neotheists (e.g., Clark Pinnock) claim to believe. According to neotheist thinking, such pronouncements by God are not infallible, and they may be in error. In the end, neotheism turns Deuteronomy 18:22 upside down and makes Moses presumptuous for predicting divinely inspired, infallible prophecy.

D. It logically leads to universalism.

Neotheists (as do all believers) believe God desires all persons to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9). If God really wants everyone to be saved and He can violate their will to assure their salvation, then certainly He will do so. Hence, neotheism appears to lead to universalism.

E. God cannot guarantee ultimate victory over evil.

As neotheists insist that God does not know the future for sure and that He does not intervene against freedom except on rare occasions, then it seems to follow that there is no guarantee of ultimate victory over evil.

F. It is contrary to God's unconditional promises.

G. It undermines confidence in God's promises.

H. It hinders belief in God's ability to answer prayer.

A God who does not know for sure what any future free act will be is severely limited in His logistic ability to do things that *can* be done by a God who knows every decision that will be made.

In summation, since neotheists assert that God is infinite and omniscient and an ontologically independent Creator of this world ex nihilo, then their belief that He is mutable, temporal, and does not know future free acts is imcompatible. Indeed, the only consistent way to believe the latter is for neotheists to forsake theism entirely and adopt panenteism. Its proponents live in theological no man's land – for it has no consistency. They cannot have it both ways. There is no logical stopping point between classical theism and contemporary panentheism. The traditional attributes of God stand or fall together.[9]

[9]For a helpful refutation of neotheim, see Norman L. Geisler, *Creating God in the Image of Man? The New "Open" View of God – Neotheism's Dangerous Drift* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997); Norman L. Giesler and H. Wayne House, *The Battle for God: Responding to the Challenge of Neotheism* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001)

# 3. THE GENDER OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP

INTRODUCTION:

The modern feminist movement (coming under the guise of being a savior for women) has gone to great lengths to:

1. Minimize the unique significance of our maleness or femaleness
2. Blur God-given sexual distinctions
3. Incite dissatisfaction and discontentment with bible domestic relationships and roles
4. Re-define femininity and masculinity by erasing the distinctive features of both.

There are clear differences between the male and female gender -- differences not of inferiority and superiority, but different strengths and functions. There are differences in make-up physically and emotionally; these differences should not be weapons to fight with but tools to build with. Each is to complement the other, fill in the weak spots, round out the edges, etc.

--What is wrong with being feminine?

--What is wrong with distinctive roles and responsibilities?

What I see in Scripture is not a difference of essence, but a difference of <u>function</u>. Not differences of worth or value, but of <u>role</u> and <u>responsibility</u>.

## *Can women lead a church in the position of elder (pastor or overseer)?

## Note five Bible principles establishing <u>male leadership</u> in the church assembly.

## I. The distinct <u>ROLES</u> in the family illustrate God's intention for male leadership (both in domestic and ecclesiastical relationships)

I Cor. 11:3 - *"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."*

Eph. 5:22-25 - *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husbands is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."*

Col. 3:18-19 - *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."*

Male leadership in the home and church is simply a difference in role (function) and responsibility for the sake of order and unity.

(Even the three Persons of the Triune Godhead have distinctive roles [a headship is seen in the Trinity - I Cor. 11:3] - Example: The Father planned creation, the Son performed Creation.)

With the erosion of male leadership in the home has come the erosion of male leadership in the church (what is happening in the church today is a mirror of what is happening in the home).

Leadership is a servant role; the man is to serve the woman in the home and church by providing unselfish, benevolent, sacrificial leadership.

A leader serves the ones led by providing:

--An example to follow

--Protection

--Direction

--Initiation

--Instruction

## II. The <u>QUALIFICATIONS</u> of the pastor (*"bishop"* = overseer) demands male leadership in the church

A. I Timothy 3:1-7

In the New Testament God uses three words to describe the ministry of church leadership:

1. Bishop (*"episcopos")* (I Tim. 3:1-7; Ti. 1:7)

2. Elder (*"presbuteros")* (Acts 14:23; I Tim. 5:17; Ti. 1:5)

3. Pastor (*"poimen")* (I Peter 5:2)

These three words are used to describe three facets of the same office (three descriptions of the same person).

In Acts 20, Paul called the *"<u>elders</u>"* ("*presbuteroi")* (v. 17) of the Ephesian Church. He refers to these same men as *"<u>overseers</u>" ("bishops - episcopoi")* (v. 28), and commands them to *"<u>feed</u>" ("poimaino - pastor")* the church of God (v. 28b).

Peter exhorted the "*<u>elders</u>"* to *"<u>shepherd</u>"* (pastor) the flock by taking the *"<u>oversight</u>"* (I Peter 5:1-2).

I Tim. 3:1-7 - *"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."*

*"If a <u>man</u> desires the office"* (v. 1)

*"The <u>husband</u> of one wife"* (v. 2)

*"He* (v. 1). . . *he* (v. 5) . . . *he* (v. 6) . . . *he* (v. 7)"

*"If a <u>man</u> know not how to rule his own house..."*

B. Titus 1:5-6 - *"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly."*

*"Ordain elders* (v. 5) . . . *the husband of one wife* (v. 6) . . ."

*"He . . . he . . ."* (v. 9)

## III. The RESTRICTION of I Corinthians 14:34-38 prohibits female leadership in the church

**V. 34**

*"Keep silent. . . not permitted to speak" -*

--In the context this prohibition would definitely apply to speaking in tongues.

--It does not mean that women cannot pray in church or give testimonies (because I Cor. 11:5 speaks of women *"praying"* [not necessarily leading in prayer] and *"prophesying"* or uttering in plain language a truth God has revealed to her).

The *"speaking"* in this verse refers to an authoritative leadership role over men as evident by the qualifying phrase *"but they are commanded to be under obedience* (submission) (i.e. to male leadership)."

It is vitally important to note that God's restriction (given via the Apostle Paul) is not one that only applied to his time, generation or culture. He states: *"As also saith the Law"* (v. 34). This reference to the Old Testament shows this New Testament teaching to be an eternal principle [not one limited to Paul's day].

**V. 35**

The Apostle Paul further applies the *"speaking"* of women to questioning the male leadership in public worship. Such disruptive, divisive questions by women who were flaunting and abusing their Christian liberty would undermine the leadership and cause a divisive, disunited spirit in the church body.

God calls it a *"shame for women to speak in church"* (v. 35) (that is: it is a shame for a woman to verbally usurp or interrogate the male leadership of the Church). The women were to hold such questions to ask their husbands at home (v. 35).

## IV. The COMMANDS of I Timothy 2:11-15 prohibit female leadership in the church

In the context, Paul is describing true Godliness (by men [v. 8] and women [v. 9-10]).
I Tim. 2:9-10 - *"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*"

Paul now further delineates how a Godly woman will act in church in verse 11.

**V. 11**

*"Learn in silence"* - to be taught without opening her mouth to refute what was taught.

*"With all subjection"* - Her being taught requires a submissive heart toward the one doing the teaching (she is to have a submissive attitude both toward her reception of truth and in her response or obedience to it).

**V. 12**

*"I suffer not* (do not allow or permit) *a woman to teach"* -

The teaching in view is that of teaching *"men"*.

--Women can teach women (Ti. 2:4-5)

--Women can teach children (Lois and Eunice to Timothy - II Tim. 1:5)

--But women are not to teach men

The Bible does not specifically prohibit a woman from *"preaching"* (per se) but from pastoring (or leading an assembly [church] with men present).

Example: In the Great Commission, we are all (male and female) commanded to *"preach* [proclaim] *the Gospel to every creature"* (Mk. 16:15).

Example: Christian women are exhorted to *"teach"* the younger women (Ti. 2:4-5 - *"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed"*).

--A woman may [with her husband] be involved in the personal discipleship of a man (EX: Priscilla with her husband Aquila - Acts 18:26 - *"And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.")*.

--A woman can serve in many capacities in the church like Phoebe did (Rom. 16:1).

--It is proper for women to teach children and other women in a church setting.

*V. 12 - "Usurp authority"* - lit. Does <u>not</u> mean to seize authority (as if, on the other hand, she can have that authority if it is <u>given</u> to her). It means to exercise her own authority over the man (in terms of giving direction or instruction in the church context - 3:15).

It is interesting how many Evangelical Feminists are quick to interpret these verses based on first-century Jewish culture, when the writer himself by-passes his own culture and goes back to the beginning of time (Gen. 2 & 3) to prove his point.

Paul gives two reasons for why women should not lead men in the church:

1) <u>Creation order</u> (v. 13)

*"Adam was first formed, then Eve."*

By creation order, God is showing which gender was the leader (head) and which was the helper.

Paul's reference to creation order shows that his teaching is not based on temporary cultural norms, but on permanent facts of creation.

2. <u>The Fall</u> (v. 14)
(A woman's proneness to certain deceptions)

Women--being generally more emotional (more feeling oriented), responding with her heart more than her head, responding more to emotion than to reason, to feeling than to fact, to the subjective rather than the objective--are easier victims to Satan's temptations.

--Many cults were founded by women (Ex: Mary Baker Eddy - Christian Science; Ellen G. White - Seventh Day Adventists)

--Many extra-Biblical revelations which have brought so much confusion and chaos to Christianity came about by women seeing apparitions of Mary or receiving the supposed gift of tongues.

--The 70 Elders Moses chose to assist in the leadership of Israel were men (Num. 11:16).

--The 12 Apostles, who also functioned as elders, were men (Lk. 6:13).

--Those who led along with the Apostles were men (Barnabas, Silas, Luke, Timothy, Titus).

--Every elder selected by the local churches was a man (Acts 14:23, 20:17; I Tim. 5:17; Ti. 1:5; Ja. 5:14; I Pet. 5:1).

## V. The EXAMPLES of the New Testament pastor (elders) evidences male leadership in the church

--There is not one example of a woman leading a New Testament assembly.

--Every reference to an *"elder"* is to men in the Bible (Old Testament and New Testament)

Didn't God use Deborah to lead Israel (Judges 4)? Yes.

1. Israel was not a "church" and she was not a "pastor" (she was a judge)

2. She lived at a time when *"every man did that which was right in his own eyes"* (Jud. 17:6, 21:25)

   The book of Judges is filled with examples of people whose roles and behavior was not necessarily normative.

   Note: Deborah prophesied privately, not in public forum.

Doesn't Paul say in Gal. 3:28 that in Christ *"there is neither male nor female"*? Yes, but Paul is not denying the differences of sexuality, he is saying that there is no distinction between how God saves each (the context is soteriological; not describing functional differences).

CONCLUSION:

The issue is not one of ability, but does one fit the qualifications of the New Testament (some women may be very articulate speakers, but this does not decide the issue).

The issue is not one of public acceptance, but does God accept female rule in the church as revealed in His Word (society may say it is okay, but the Bible does not).

The issue is not cultural but Biblical (times and societies may change, but God's principles do not).

The issue is not popularity (many may be filling ecclesiastical positions now though it was never intended by God; but the prevalence of something has never been used as a measuring stick of its rightness).

The issue is not what is traditional but what is Biblical.

The issue is not male chauvinism nor male ego abut being faithful to God established without feelings of superiority.

God's will never contradicts God's Word. He will never lead someone to violate His Holy Scripture. (God has never called one woman to pastor a church! How do I know? Because His Word prohibits such) (Jer. 23:32 -*"Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord."*)

My counsel to women pastors:

1) Let the Bible not society be your authority on matters of Christian service.

2) Re-examine the bible's teaching on the role of leadership and the New Testament teaching of the pastoral office.

3) Upon being convicted of God's design for Godly male leadership, humbly resign your position and pray for God to use your life and gifts according to His will and purpose for you.

May God give us Christian women who have the inner qualities of humility, gentleness, holiness, Spirit control, and contentment so that each willingly and gladly submits to her God-given role and utilizes her great God-given gifts and abilities in His way and His will.

Recommended Book: **Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (A Response to Evangelical Feminism)** (Edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem; Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL, 1991)

# 4. The Error of Racial Supremacy

**Introduction:**

Our world (and particularly our country) is seeing a co-mingling of peoples. A multiculturalism has been born.

A multitude of racial groups have landed on our shores, and this provides us with a great opportunity to impact the world right on our door step. This door will close in their face if we allow prejudice to control our perspective and attitudes toward these of a diverse background or color.

To be prejudiced is to pre-judge a person without knowing any facts about his/her own personal character.
Prejudice is judging a book by its cover without seeing the contents of its pages.

## What is prejudice?

Prejudice is the sin of pre-judging a person based on a superficial, non-moral, exterior, surface evaluation. Prejudice evaluates externals over internals and often esteems the temporal over the eternal.

Biblical examples of people who made erroneous pre-judgments:
--Abraham toward Abimelech (Gen. 20:11)
--Joshua toward the Gibeonites (Josh. 9)
--Satan toward Job (Job 1:11, 2:5)
--Israel toward Saul (I Sam. 10:23-24)
--Goliath toward David (I Sam. 17:42-44)
--Pharisees toward John (for not eating & drinking) and Jesus (for eating & drinking)

How quick people are to judge (become critical of) a person based on:
--the clothing he/she wears (which is not necessarily an indication of the heart)
--the car he/she drives
--the Bible version he/she carries to church
(those who prefer the KJV are often judged as antiquated and uneducated, while those who read the NASV are judged to be liberal or at best New Evangelical)
--the denominational label attached to his/her church
--facial hair (beard - a symbol of rebellion; Beware: Mormons are as clean-cut as you can get!)

*Outward appearance vs. the heart
(I Sam. 16:7)

*Labels vs. inner reality
(cp. Mark 9:38-40)
--Labels are sometimes misleading

Prior to having a clear understanding about a person, what attitude should we have toward him? Suspicion? Skepticism? Or love? (I Cor. 13:7)

Prejudice is "thinking negatively of others without sufficient justification. Prejudice is the process of stereotyping, by which certain characteristics, either positive or negative, are ascribed to all members of a group." (Gordon Allport, The Nature of Prejudice (1954), cited by Breckenridge, "What Color is Your God?" p. 61)

Jesus described the heart of prejudice very succinctly when He said: *"Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment"* (John 7:24). The word *"appearance"* is derived from the word *opsis* (akin to "optic," the eye), which refers to that which you see, outward appearance, the outward aspect of a person, his face (Jn. 11:44) or countenance.

To the legalistic Pharisees, who were making a judgment of Him for healing a man on the Sabbath, Christ said, in effect, "Stop judging based on outward, face value, external criteria, and make decisions about Me based on the truth and righteousness of my actions.

The Bible does not teach that we should not judge; indeed, we must have discernment and make discriminatory judgments (I Thes. 5:21; Rev. 2:2; I Cor. 5:5-11; Rom. 16:17; John 7:24).

However, we are never to judge with a nasty, unmerciful, harsh, censorious, critical, and condemning attitude (Mt. 7:1), nor are we to prematurely discriminate against a particular person or situation without having all the facts about that person or situation.

No discerning man of God should make inalterable pre-evaluations about anything without seeking the truth and concrete evidence about a man or matter.

*". . . the honor of kings is to search out a matter"* (Prov. 25:2).

The noble Bereans did not just take Paul's word for it; they *"searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so"* (Acts 17:11).

God's Word is clear about the folly of making judgments about any matter before obtaining the specific facts (cp. Prov. 18:13).

The basic, underlying, core cause of prejudice is sinful pride. How we view "self" will influence how we view others. People naturally love themselves; it is part of man's selfish nature to elevate self and anything related to ourselves. Our egotistical pride will therefore favor others who look like us, act like us, have some resource or material that will benefit us. At the heart of prejudice is a vain idolatry, an attitude of supremacy.

It is a sinful tendency (of fallen, depraved humanity) to think of themselves--and hence their nationality, race, or color--as being superior to others.

Examples:

--The Greeks during the time of Alexander the Great
--The Romans during the time of the Caesars
--The Germans during the time of Adolph Hitler
--The Klu Klux Klan of today
--The Nation of Islam (Louis Farrakan) and the Black Israelite movement of today

Why is prejudice so wicked?

>It often extols race over righteousness

>It often esteems color over character

>It often respects popularity over principle

>It often glorifies culture over conduct

>It often values wealth over worth

>It often evaluates externals not internals

>It often smacks of evolution over creationism

>It often promotes division over unity

>It often instigates strife rather than peace/harmony

>It often elevates nationalistic pride over Christ-like humility

People behave in response to what they believe (how people act toward others is a manifestation of the belief system they hold to). A flawed or skewed theology will result in an erroneous view of God, self, and others.

# I. SHATTER THE BARRIER OF RACIAL SUPREMACY

## *(God's people must extol righteousness over race)*

(Key Text: Acts 10:9-48)

***Don't glory in your people (Beware of national pride)**

Jew and Gentile are equal in the body of Christ. (Rom. 2:11 - *"For there is no respect of persons with God."*) God does not show racial favoritism (nor should we!) (v. 34)

Why not? 4 Evidences:

1. GOD'S APPROVAL IS TOWARD ALL (V. 9-16)
   (All men, whether Jew or Gentile, are kosher with God)

   Peter had a nationalistic pride that God would have to erode. God would have to prepare Peter to let him know that He accepted all - Jew and Gentile on an equal basis.

2. GOD'S MESSAGE IS FOR ALL (V. 17-33)
   (All men have the right to hear the Word of God)

3. GOD'S GRACE IS FOR ALL (V. 34-43)
   (All men can be forgiven by the Son of God)
   a. GOD GRACIOUSLY INVITES ALL (V. 34-35)
   b. GOD GRACIOUSLY GAVE HIS SON FOR ALL (V. 36-42)
   c. GOD GRACIOUSLY FORGIVES ALL WHO BELIEVE (V. 43)

4. GOD'S SPIRIT IS FOR ALL (V. 44-48)
   (All believers are baptized by the Spirit of God)

### The Christian's identity should not be "in his people," but "in Christ."

No servant of God can tolerate the sin of racial discrimination in his life.

All of us discriminate on a daily basis (i.e. we make judgments or decisions to choose on thing over another based on reasonable criteria; example: the supermarket, the car to buy, the school to attend, the boy to marry, the truth to believe, etc.).

Discrimination is not wrong (on moral matters, on stewardship matters).

However, racial discrimination is wrong (note: racial discrimination and homosexual discrimination are not the same issue. Why? You did not have a choice as to your skin color, but you do have a choice as to the lifestyle you choose to live.).

1. No racism (because all men are created equal) (Gen. 1:27)
2. No nationalistic pride (because our citizenship is in Heaven) (Phil. 3:20)

*Don't nurture an attitude of ethnic supremacy.

Beware of the influences of the "White Supremists" -
--Klu Klux Clan
--Hitler mentality
--Gloria Sanger
--Deep South USA prejudice

Beware of the influences of the "Black Supremists" -
--Black Israelites
--Black Muslims (Louis Farrakan's Nation of Islam)
--Black Pride movements
(Black heritage Bibles, etc.)

## II. SHATTER THE BARRIER OF COLOR SUPREMACY

### *(God's people must esteem the soul over the skin)*

(Key Texts: Gen. 1:27, 9:6; James 3:9; Mark 8:37-37)
***Don't glory in your appearance (Beware of carnal pride)**

Realize that the essence of each human being does not consist in their skin color, size, shape, sex, or social status -- but in their soul/spirit.

*Realize the incredible value of a human soul!

**1. Every person has been made in the image and likeness of God** (Gen. 1:27; 9:6).

a. "Image" ("tselem") - points to man's personality features that are reproductions of God's spiritual, intellectual, and moral qualities.

b. "Likeness" ("demuth") - points to man as not being the same as God, but as being similar in pattern or model.

c. Why does God use both words, "image" and "likeness?"

To avoid the implication that man is a precise copy of God, albeit in miniature, the less specific and more abstract word "demuth" ("likeness") was added by God. "Demuth" then defines and limits the meaning of "tselem" (Humbert, Barr, T.W.O.T. Vol. 1, p. 192).

d. Man bears the image of God in three senses:

1) Man is like God in that he is a person (with personality). A "person" is a being who possesses self-consciousness, self-determination, intellect, emotion, will, world-consciousness, etc.
2) Man is like God in that he has a spirit (Jn. 4:24; I Cor. 6:20; cp. Eph. 4:23-24).
3) Man is like God in that he has a moral nature (a basic, innate comprehension of right and wrong - Rom. 2:14; Eccl. 7:29).

When Adam sinned the image of God in man was marred and defiled but was not obliterated.

*Since mankind still retains this sense of the image of God, his life has a dignity and is to be respected, honored, and protected. Doing so honors the Creator (Gen. 9:6; James 3:9).

**2. Every person has a soul-spirit which is of more value than all the wealth of the world** (Mt. 16:26; Mk. 8:36, 37).

Improper definition of man:
"Man is a body who has a soul/spirit"

Accurate definition of man:
"Man is a soul/spirit who has a body"

**The SOUL**
Hebrew - נפש ("nephesh")
Greek - ψυχη ("psuche")
The "soul" is the immaterial aspect of man that gives him life
(Gen. 2:7 - "...Man became a living soul" ["nephesh"]).

**The SPIRIT**
Hebrew - רוח ("ruach")
Greek - πνευμα ("pneuma")

NOTE: The words "ruach" and "pneuma" in certain contexts are translated wind or breath (cp. Jn. 3:8; Rev. 11:11) because there is a parallel between the spirit and the wind or breath. "The spirit, like the wind, is invisible, immaterial, and powerful" (Vine, Expository Dictionary).

a. The "spirit" is the immaterial aspect of man that gives him a capacity to know and enjoy God.

1) We know God via the spirit (I Cor. 2:10-14).
2) We serve God with our spirit (Rom. 1:9 12:11)
3) Our spirit belongs to God (I Cor. 6:20)
4) The Holy Spirit bears witness to our human spirit (Rom. 8:16)
5) We pray and sing to God via the spirit (I Cor. 14:15)
6) God's grace is with our spirit (Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23)
7) God's son Jesus Christ is with our spirit (II Tim. 4:22)
8) We are saved by God in our spirit (I Cor. 5:5)
9)Upon death, our spirit goes to Heaven (Acts 7:59 - Note: the "soul" does also - Rev. 6:9)

b. Man's "spirit" is not to be equated with the "Holy Spirit."
Our spirit is distinct from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit ministers to the Christian by means of his human spirit, and the Holy Spirit lives in believers; but yet He is a distinct person.
God's Spirit does not need to be sanctified (He already is!), but our spirit must be (I Thes. 5:23).

c. Unsaved man does have a spirit, but it is "dead" in it relationship to God and its receptivity to God.
All unsaved do have a spirit, the problem is that it is not working in relationship to God. It is "dead" (Eph.2:1-5) and needs to be renewed to life (Eph. 4:23)

Is there a difference (distinction) between man's soul and spirit?
Answer: Yes. Key Text: **I Thessalonians 5:23**

God divides "soul and spirit" in Heb. 4:12; I Cor. 2:14-15 and 15:44; and Luke 1:46-47.

What is the difference (distinction) between man's soul and spirit?
The "Spirit" is the immaterial (invisible) part of man that can relate to God (the spiritual realm).
The "Soul" is the immaterial part of man that relates to this life (the natural realm).

**3. Every person's soul will live on for <u>eternity</u>**

a. The souls of the saved are <u>with the Lord</u> (Gen.35:18; II Cor.5:8; Acts 7:59)

b. The souls of the lost are experiencing <u>eternal anguish & suffering</u> (Mt. 10:28; Rev. 14:11; 20:14,15)

Racism over skin color is foolish because a "soul" has no color and the soul/spirit is the essence of a man!

# III. SHATTER THE BARRIER OF <u>SOCIAL</u> SUPREMACY

## *(God's people must respect a man's <u>principle</u> over his <u>popularity</u>)*

(Key Text: I Cor. 1:24-31)

***Don't glory in your <u>fame</u> and <u>notoriety</u> (Beware of <u>social</u> pride)**

The Corinthians' main problem was "I" trouble. "I am this; I can do that; I am better than you are" etc.
They were *"puffed up"* with pride (I Cor. 4:6, 18-19; 5:2).
In these first three chapters, Paul <u>deflates</u> their pride and elevates, magnifies, and exalts God.

Note the previous context:
In verses 17-25, the Apostle Paul portrayed <u>the message of God</u> (*"the preaching of the cross"* - v. 18)
as being <u>weak</u> in men's eyes, but <u>mighty</u> in God's eyes.

Now in verses 26-31, he portrays <u>the people of God</u> as being <u>weak</u> in the world's eyes, but <u>blessed</u> in God's eyes.
Continuing with the intention to deflate the Corinthians' vain pride and to humble those who glory in men, Paul shows the type of people God saves and uses for His glory.

God not only has a <u>message</u> the unsaved, perishing world regards as *"foolish"* (v. 18, 21, 23, 25), but He also has <u>messengers</u> they mighty view as foolish.

God not only has a <u>gospel</u> the godless, unconverted, lost, pagan world would disregard, but He has a <u>people</u> that often don't add up to much in the world's estimation.

God is <u>not</u> desperately "looking for millionaires or famous athletes or entertainers or statesmen" as if He needed their money, fame, fortune, or talent to get His work done!

The Lord specializes in converting simple folk, common people, the under-privileged, the down-and-outers, the project kids, and other looked-down-upon groups.

Some might say: "That's because they are the only ones dumb enough to believe the Bible."

No, actually, they are the only ones <u>humble</u> enough to believe!
Jesus said, *"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes."* (Mt. 11:25).

God delights in taking a Sarah who could not bear children and making her the mother of one of the largest races on earth (Gen. 18:14, 32:12)
God delights in taking a humble slave like Joseph and elevating him second to Pharaoh over Egypt (Gen. 41:38-44).
God delights in enlisting 300 soldiers of Gideon to fight and conquer 120,000 Mideanites (Jud. 7:2, 7, 12; 8:10) (NOTE: 400 to 1 odds).
God delights in utilizing a Samson to destroy 1,000 wicked Philistines with a jawbone of a donkey (Jud. 15:16).
God delights in using a red-headed, freckle-faced, baby-faced (I Sam. 17:42) shepherd boy named David to wipe out a 9'9" fully armored Philistine named Goliath (I Sam. 17).
God delights in providing adequate food for a poor widow of Zarephath who only had a few drops of oil and a handful of grain (I Ki. 17:9ff).
God delights in using three Hebrew youths to show up King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (Dan. 3).
God delights in using as His mouthpiece a John the Baptist, "who had no formal education, no training in a trade or profession, no money, no military rank, no political position, no social pedigree, no impressive appearance (or diet!)" (MacArthur, p. 51). Yet Jesus said, *"Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist"* (Mt. 11:11).
God delights in taking a boy's lunch consisting of two sardines and five bite-size biscuits to feed 5,000 men besides women and children (Mt. 14:17-19).
"Little is much when God is in it." -- Conversely, much is little, if God is not in it!
God delights in taking unlearned, ignorant, dumb fishermen from Galilee and turning them into the most bold and influential mortals ever to spread the Gospel message (Acts 4:13).

**God can take someone the world views as a "nobody" and make a somebody out of him! ... He can take something the world views as "nothing" and make something out of it!*

*Why?*

*God mightily transforms "nobodies" and "nothings"...*

1. To display His wisdom & power(v.24-26)

2. To shame the wisdom of this world(v.27-28)

3. To strip man of his proud boasting(v.29)

4. To glorify His Son -- Jesus Christ(v.30)

5. To fulfill His Word(v.31)

*"Thus saith the Lord,*
*Let not the <u>wise man</u>*
*glory in his wisdom,*
*neither let the <u>mighty man</u>*
*glory in his might,*
*let not the <u>rich man</u>*
*glory in his riches:*
*But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me,*
*that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment,*
*and righteousness in the earth:*
*for in these things I delight,*
*saith the Lord."*
(Jeremiah 9:23-24)

# IV. SHATTER THE BARRIER OF <u>CULTURAL</u> SUPREMACY

## *(God's people must honor <u>character</u> and <u>conduct</u> over <u>culture</u> and <u>custom</u>)*

(Key Text: I Cor. 9:19-23)

***Don't glory in your <u>ways</u> of doing things (Beware of <u>cultural</u> pride)**

Paul, rather than forcing the Gentiles to embrace His Jewish culture and customs, made personal sacrifices and adjustments to spread the Gospel inside of the culture he ministered to without doctrinal or moral compromise.

**Paul chose to <u>adjust</u> his <u>methodologies</u>** so that he would reach more people, without compromising his message or Biblical convictions (v.19-23)

**V. 19**

In verses 19-22, the phrase *"that I might gain"* occurs five times.
Paul's heart was fixed on gaining souls for Christ.

*"Free from all men"* - Although Paul did <u>not</u> have to live to suit anyone's customs, cultural practices, or mannerisms, he freely chose to serve them by adapting to their non-moral distinctions so as to win them for Christ.

**V. 20**

--Paul adapted his lifestyle to the <u>Jew</u> to win them (he would perhaps eat kosher foods, wear a beanie on his head, speak the Hebrew which he knew, observe the Sabbath, etc. Observe certain Old Testament Jewish Laws [not with the intent of gaining salvation]).

**V. 21**

--Paul adapted his lifestyle to the Gentile to win them (when in a Gentile's home, Paul did not rise up at the hour of prayer, face Jerusalem and begin praying; he didn't fulfill Old Testament civil and ceremonial laws, which were done away with and fulfilled at the cross. He lived by the Law of Love when in a Gentile's house.

**V. 22**

--Paul adapted his lifestyle to the weak to win them (the "weak" in context would include the one with a weak conscience toward idols [i.e.:9-12]; Paul would not engage in any practice which would violate the conscience of anyone.)

*"I am made all things to all men"* - This does not involve Biblical compromise on doctrine, dogma, or clearly-defined moral issues.

This does not involve adaptations for fleshly purposes (i.e. "When in Rome do as the Romans do.").

It does involve adjustments in technique, methodology, and custom for the Gospel's sake.

What does it mean to *"be all things to all men"*? It means:

1. A willingness to allow for differences (not everyone has to "do Christianity" just like an American; how willing are you to accommodate the differences of others without ignoring or violating God's moral law?)

2. A willingness to bend on non-moral issues (compromise on preferences, never on principles)

3. A willingness to adjust your ways of doing things so that you can conform to the culture you are ministering in, without Biblical compromise (be flexible).

4. A willingness to be open to new methodologies

Our authority is "sola scriptura," not any man's culture.

We should consider these principles of cross-cultural ministry as given by Reuben H. Brooks:

1) The Bible shows no ethnically pure "correct" culture.

2) As in the Bible, so today we should accept people from every culture and ethnic group as our neighbors and treat them with mutual respect and dignity.

3) The Old Testament Scripture is replete with examples of a transcultural Gospel.

4) The New Testament does not show one culture to be the correct one and all others wrong.

5) The true message of Christianity is a person, Jesus Christ.

6) To cross into other cultures is the expected norm for God's people, not the exception.

(Breckenridge, p. 77)

# V. SHATTER THE BARRIER OF <u>ECONOMIC</u> SUPREMACY

## *(God's people must value a person's <u>worth</u> over his <u>wealth</u>)*

(Key Text: James 2:1-13)

***Don't glory in your <u>status</u> (Beware of <u>material</u> pride)**

First impressions of people are <u>not</u> always accurate impressions.

First time impressions are rarely correct.

60% of those in the Roman Empire were of the poor/slave class.

*"Respect of persons"* = lit. to "receive the face"; to show partiality, personal favoritism.

*"Respect of persons"* = a biased judgment, based on <u>external</u> appearances or circumstances such as race, wealth, social rank, or popularity while not looking at the person's internal true worth (value).

*"Respect of persons"* - to judge people <u>superficially</u> rather than on the basis of their true worth in God's sight.

Deut. 1:16, 17 - God commanded the judges to *"judge righteously between every man and his brother . . . Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man . . ."*

**YOU MUST NOT HAVE PARTIALITY!** (v. 1)
Why not? 4 Reasons:

1. BECAUSE WHEN YOU ARE PARTIAL, **YOU HAVE A WRONG VALUE SYSTEM** (v. 2-4)
V. 4 - "Judges" - you need to judge a person's worth as God judges it (He is an immortal soul, created in the image of God).
"Evil thoughts" Sinful motives. Can this happen in a Church today? Yes!
When special attention is given to the rich in hopes that they will give money liberally.
Social and economic distinctions should be wiped out by the Gospel.
In the early church, there must have been a sense of awkwardness when the master would sit next to his slave; or if the slave led the service in which his master was but a member of the congregation. We have a tendency to cater to the rich because we hope to get something out of them, and to avoid the poor because they embarrass us.

2. BECAUSE WHEN YOU ARE PARTIAL, **YOU ARE INCONSISTENT**
(v. 5 - 7)

a. THEOLOGICALLY - INCONSISTENT WITH THE METHOD OF GOD (v.5- 6a)

1) Those you reject, God selects (v. 5).
2) Those you reject, you dishonor (v. 6a).

b. LOGICALLY - inconsistent with practice of the rich.

1) Those you favor, oppress you (v. 6b).
2) Those you favor, dishonor God (v. 7)

3. BECAUSE WHEN YOU ARE PARTIAL, **YOU BREAK THE ROYAL LAW OF LOVE** (V. 8-11).

4. BECAUSE WHEN YOU ARE PARTIAL, **YOU ARE GUILTY OF HYPOCRISY** (v. 12-13).

Your practice (treatment of others) must be consistent with how Christ treated you. Did he show special favor to you because of any wealth, gifts, abilities, etc. that you had? -- NO!

Application to Soul-winning -

Ask yourself:
1) Am I as interested in the salvation of a poor man as one who is rich? (i.e. - "weird vs. normal")
2) Am I willing to put as much effort into the winning of one who is uncultured as one who is educated?
3) Am I more excited when a person gets saved who is talented, gifted (a potential leader) as when one with limited gifts gets saved? (Look at their potential! - What God can make them)

Conclusion:

Basically, what is needed for your church to overthrow its prejudice is:

1. A right view of self and others
   (A Biblical anthropology)

2. A right view of God
   (A Biblical theology)

3. A right view of salvation
   (A Biblical soteriology)

****Needed: A Right Theology**

In God's eyes, all lines of distinction, all supposed marks of superiority are non-existent.

*"For there is no respect of persons with God"* (Rom. 2:11).

Jesus did not show partiality. Even His enemies admitted: *"Master, we know that Thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men."* (Matt. 22:16b)

a. God shows no partiality in judging men
   (Rom. 2:9-11 - *"Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God."*)

b. God shows no partiality in describing men (Rom. 3:9-23)
   (Rom. 3:9-10 - *"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.")*

****Needed: A Right Soteriology**

God shows no partiality in saving men (Rom. 3:24-31).

Gal. 3:26-28 - *"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."*

All races are accepted by God and saved on an equal level (Gal. 3:26-28).

Do you view yourself as a debtor to all people (indebted to reach all with the Gospel)?

Rom. 1:14 - *"I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise."*

All races are equal in the Body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13).

***Prejudice has adversely affected evangelism, because it has produced:***

1) **Fear:** Many are afraid to witness to some people because they are rich, famous, Jewish, too educated, too potentially dangerous, etc. Such are pre-judged as unreachable.

2) **Neglect:** Many look down their proud noses at others who are poor, of a certain race, color, or culture. Such are prejudged as being unworthy of time, effort, and ministry.

**Questions to consider:**

--Should a black preacher start a "black church"? (No, unless he is in a part of the world where there are only black people)

--What should naturally divide people?

1) Unknown language barriers (Gen. 11:1-9)

2) Unrepentant sinful barriers

   a) Unbelief (II Cor. 6:14-17)
   b) Sinful practices (II Thes. 3:6; I Cor. 5:9-13)
   c) Doctrinal heresy affecting cardinal doctrine (Rom. 16:17; II John 10)

**A concluding practical encouragement:**

1. Pastor, set the example of an unprejudiced view of others (I Tim. 4:12)

2. Select workers in your church based on Biblical spirituality (not race, color, wealth, or popularity) (Acts 6:1-7)

3. Teach your congregation a Biblical anthropology

4. Fulfill the Great Commission by witnessing to *"every creature"* (Mk. 16:15) and by making disciples of "*all nations"* (Mt. 28:19) (look at people from God's perspective).

5. Beware of telling foolish racial jokes and using demeaning, derogatory speech about others of diverse ethnic origin (Eph. 5:4) (Be careful about making broad, sweeping statements, such as "All _____ are _____")

   The cultural tendencies of a particular nation or ethnic group, are not necessarily hard and fast absolutes about everyone in that group. Beware of making categorical statements.

   We don't need to worry about becoming "politically correct" (although we should be Biblical considerate). Let's concern ourselves with being "spiritually correct."

6. Allow for cultural differences in non-doctrinal, non-moral areas of life.

7. Encourage the parents of your church to teach their children by example and precept to have an unprejudiced view of others (prejudice is primarily learned behavior, and it is most often learned from one's parents).

8. Mingle and visit with every one in your church (beware of cliques of any type) (Rom. 15:7).

9. Let's be committed to true justice (Ii Sam. 23:3; Prov. 17:15) (Show no favoritism or discrimination based on non-moral criteria. Don't write anyone off, but give everyone a fair hearing).

10. Appreciate and utilize the wholesome diversity that exists in the church (I Cor. 12).

11. Remember I Cor. 4:5 - *"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."*

# 5. Biblical Dispensationalism

## I. Dispensationalism (Introduction):

The word "Dispensationalism" is a Biblical Term:

- *1Co 9:17 For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.*
- *Eph 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:*
- *Eph 3:2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:*
- *Col 1:25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;*

**Definition of the term:**
*οικονομια (oikonomia oy-kon-om-ee'-ah)*

The term is made up of two words:
Oikos – House
Nomos – Rules or Laws

*Oikonomia speaks of the management of a household or of household affairs*
*1a) specifically, the management, oversight, administration, of other's property*
*1b) the office of a manager or overseer, stewardship*
*1c) administration, dispensation (Strong)*

The word refers to the management of the household or the exercise of a responsibility or stewardship.

See: Luke 16:1-13 – where we find Jesus' parable of a rich man and his stewards. Ryrie enumerates four basic aspects of any "stewardship" (or "dispensation") which are apparent from this passage:

1. There are two parties involved, an owner of the property to be entrusted, and a steward to whom it is entrusted (16:1).
2. There is carefully defined responsibility on the part of the steward (16:1).
3. There is accountability at any time; it is the prerogative of the owner to demand a reckoning (16:20.
4. There can be a change at any time, according to the discretion of the owner (16:2). (Ryrie, cited by Doug Bookman: Pillsbury Baptist Bible College and A Definition of Dispensationalism)

## Various Definitions of a "Dispensation"

**Scofield Reference Bible:**

"A dispensation is a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God."

**Clarence E. Mason, Jr.:**

"…in its Biblical usage, a dispensation is a divinely established stewardship of a particular revelation of God's mind and will which brings added responsibility to the whole race of men or that portion of the race to whom the revelation is particularly given by God."

**George D. Beckwith:**

"A dispensation is a period of time during which God tests man in regard to man's relationship to Himself. In each period of time there is some revelation of the will of God, and a new test of man. Each dispensation begins in fresh divine light and inspiration, and ends in darkness, gloom, and judgment."

**Charles Ryrie:**

"A dispensation is a distinguishable economy (stewardship) in the outworking of God's purposes."

## Essential Features of each dispensation:

- A New Revelation given by God

- A New Responsibility expected from Man (obedience is expected to that New Revelation)

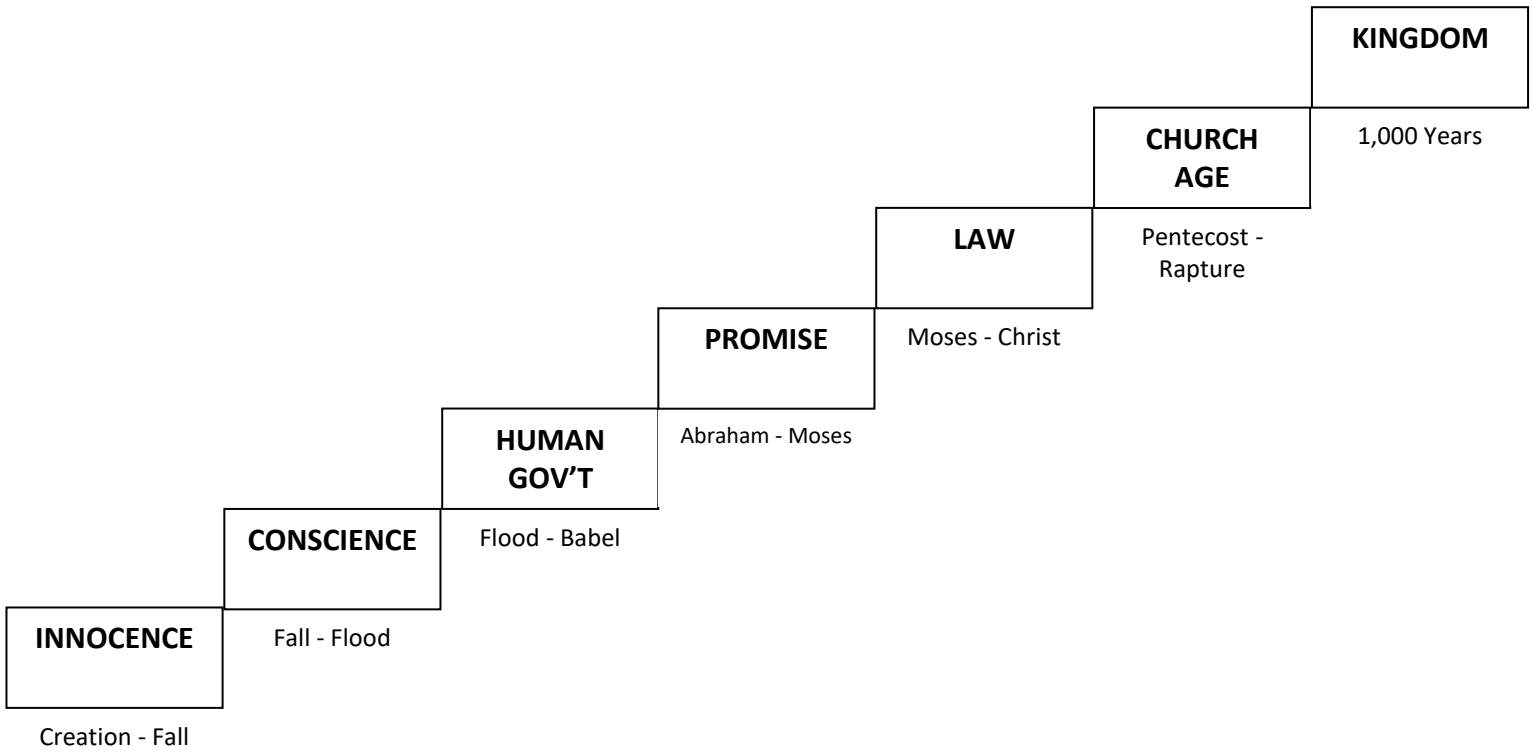
## The essentials of Dispensationalism:

1. A dispensationalist recognizes and maintains the **distinction** between God's dealings with **O.T. Israel** and the **N.T. Church**.

2. A dispensationalist will consistently employ a **normal (literal) hermeneutic** in his interpretation of Scripture; This applies to prophesy as well as all Scripture.

3. A dispensationalist regards the underlying purpose of God to be **His own glory**, rather than the redemption of men; the dispensationalist's approach to Scripture is decidedly God-centered (theocentric), not man-centered (anthropocentric). A Doxological perspective.

## *Illustration of the seven dispensations position:*




### Characteristics of each Dispensation:

1. God pours out **new revelation** during the transition period between each dispensation.

2. Each dispensation is **built upon the former** dispensation

3. Each dispensation has **more improvement** than the previous one.

4. Each is **not a trial and error** dispensation (God is unfolding His One Plan progressively)

# II. Dispensationalism as it Relates to Hermeneutics

A. Hermeneutics is that science which furnishes the principle of interpretation. These principles guide and govern anybody's system of theology.

B. Ryrie suggests using the term "normal interpretation" or "plain interpretation" for "literal interpretation," so that no one receives the mistaken notion that literal principle rules out figures of speech.

C. Literal interpretation must be accepted because:

1. God is the originator of language and wants to convey a literal message to be understood by all.

2. The Bible prophecies were literally fulfilled

3. Without the use of the plain, normal, or literal method of interpretation, all objectivity is lost.

4. The unifying principle of Covenant Theology is God's plan of redemption.

5. The unifying principle of dispensationalism is seeing the various dispensations as successive manifestations of God's purpose and progressive manifestations of it.

6. Ryrie's three proofs that the unifying principle of the Bible is doxological (God's glory):

   a. Salvation is for God's glory, and redemption is one of the means to the end of glorifying God.

   b. God has a plan for the angels which will result in glory going to God, not in their salvation.

   c. God's purpose for the Kingdom involves salvation but is not confined to redemption.

7. Hermenteutical Guidelines regarding Dispensationalism's Continuing Principles

   a. Continuing principles may:

      - stabilize - remain unchanged (ex: marriage)
      - terminate (ex: ceremonial law)
      - adjust, alter (ex: Sabbath & Lord's day)

   b. Continuing principles may be discerned by:

      - New Testament sanctioning continuance (Rom. 13)
      - No theological conflict in New Testament (Revelation)

   c. Continuing principles may be classified as:

      - ordinances
      - judgments
      - principles

   d. Continuing principles may terminate as necessary but continue as:

      - tradition (ex: Paul's purification Acts 21)
      - commemoration (sacrifices in Millennium)

   e. Continuing principles may have been kept (foreshadowed) before being commanded in the new dispensation. Examples:

      - Sabbath
      - government
      - tithing
      - Passover

## Guidelines for Interpreting the Bible

"Hermeneutics" - the science and art of interpreting the Bible. Comes from the Greek name "Hermes," who was an interpreter for Jupiter (a Greek idol).

A. Why have principles or laws of interpreting

1. We are commanded to "keep" the Word (2 Tim. 1:13, 14)
2. We are commanded to "commit" the Word to others (2 Tim. 2:2)
3. We are commanded to "rightly divide" the Word (2 Tim. 2:15)
4. We are commanded to "continue" in the Word (2 Tim. 3:14)
5. Every word of Scripture written by Moses up to John was breathed out of the very mouth of God (2 Tim. 3:16a)
6. All Scripture is "profitable" (when understood as God intended it to be understood) (2 Tim. 3:16b)
7. We are commanded to "preach the Word. . . with doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2)
8. Cults are started by not interpreting Scripture properly (2 Pet. 3:15, 16)
9. There is a curse on anyone who adds to or takes away from Scripture (Rev. 22:18, 19)

B. How not to Interpret

1. Don't allegorize (spiritualize).

2. Don't interpret according to your experiences (ex: people say, "You can't tell me tongues aren't for today - I've experienced it!").

3. Don't use parallel passage approach only (context comes first).

4. Don't find types (predicted foreshadowings) in every minute detail of the Old Testament (discover types, don't create them).

5. Don't reject truths in the Bible just because you can't totally understand them.

6. Don't press your ideas (beliefs) into scripture where there is no clear Scripture to support your belief.

7. Don't argue from silence or reason improperly (ex: "All dogs have tails; a cat is not a dog; therefore, a cat does not have a tail.").

C. How to Interpret

1. By submitting o the Holy Spirit (for understanding and wisdom) (Ps. 119:18).
   - Begin with prayer
   - Be willing to change your opinion where Scripture clearly contradicts what you think
   - Be open for God to speak to your heart (read to obey - not just to get knowledge)

2. By studying the context - the flow of author's thought before the verse or verses you are studying and after the verse or verses you are studying.

   a. To understand a word you must understand the verse which the word is in

   b. To understand a verse you must understand the paragraph which the verse is in

   c. To understand a paragraph you must understand the entire book which the paragraph is in

3. By interpreting Scripture literally (normally). Read it at face value, except where there is an obvious figure of speech being used. Ex: when Jesus said, "I am the door" - He was not an actual door. Some figures of speech are:

   - comparisons (Jer. 23:29)
   - substitutions (Lk. 13:32)
   - exaggerations to emphasize (Jn. 21:25)
   - understatements (1 Th. 2:15)
   - personifications (Rom. 6:12)

**Seek the natural and obvious meaning of Scripture. "Let God say what He does say, instead of making Him say what you think He should have said." Pull out the meaning of the text ("exegete") rather than introducing a meaning into it ("eisogete"). "If the normal sense makes good sense, seek no other sense, or you will have nonsense!"

4. By asking yourself, "What significance did this passage have to the ones to whom it was originally written?"

5. By remembering that our English version is a translation of the original Greek and Hebrew. English does not always give us the clearest translation of the total meaning of a word or phrase (so you may want to compare various translations).

6. By realizing that verse numbers and paragraph divisions were not inspired (they were not added until the 14th century).

7. By remembering that God revealed His Word gradually and progressively (Heb. 1:1-4) (ex: the early church in the book of Acts only had the Old Testament for their Scripture).

8. By knowing that written historical events are not necessarily the normal experience for us living today (ex: Paul's vision on the road to Damascus)

9. By comparing Scripture with Scripture (but do so by knowing the context of each passage).

10. By realizing that there is only one correct interpretation of every passage of Scripture (two different people cannot hold two different views about one portion of Scripture and both be correct).

11. By knowing that interpretation is different from application of Scripture (you must properly interpret before you can know how it applies to you).

# III. Essentials to a proper understanding of Dispensationalism:

The Bible teaches that God **progressively revealed His Word** to mankind.
This is called "**progressive revelation**"

***Hebrews 1:1-2***
*"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, …"*

"Sundry times" - God gave His Old Testament revelation at various time periods. Each bit of revelation would build on the former.

"Divers manners" - God revealed Himself in different ways.

a. Miracles - the mighty acts of God in history. When God spoke by "event revelation," He always had a messenger to interpret it with "word revelation."
   EXAMPLE: the Exodus - Ex. 5:1-2, cp. 7:4-5; Ps. 106:7-9.

b. Theophanies - physical appearance of God to man.
   1) Natural theophany (appearances in nature) - Ex. 3 (burning bush) Ex. 13:21-22 (pillar of cloud and fire)
   2) Auditory theophany (God's voice could be heard) - Ex. 19:1-3; Lk. 3:22.
   3) Bodily theophany (The Angel [Messenger] of the Lord) - a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ - Gen. 16:10; Judges 2:1ff.

c. Urim & Thumim - two precious stones, used like lots, to determine God's will for Israel - Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21; Dt. 33:8).

d. His Word
   1) Direct words (Ex. 33:11)
   2) Direct writing (Ex. 31:18)
   3) Dreams (Dan. 7:1)
   4) Visions (Ez. 1:1)
   5) Scriptures - the written Word (Ex. 17:14, 24:4, 7; Dt. 31:24; II Tim. 3:16)

"The fathers" - The Jewish patriarchs (Hebrew forefathers)

God had to reveal Himself, because man by nature is unable to discover God (can't see Him or know Him); also because man by the fall is uninterested in discovering God. Because of sin, man hides from God and is dead spiritually.

v. 2
"These last days" - The entire New Testament era is called the Last Days.
The time period between Christ's first coming and His second coming is noted as a period of the "Last Days." With God, a thousand years are as one day.
In accordance with the theme of the superiority of Christ, the writer of Hebrews shows His superiority over the prophets by revealing Christ as the last and final spokesman for God (SEE: Hebrews 2:2-3)

Mohammed was not "the seal of the prophets." Jesus is the final authority.

# IV. Dispensationalism as it relates to Israel

"No one who neglects the Jews can understand the plan of God in history, either that part of it which is realized, or that which is to be." (William Graham Scroggie, Prophecy and History, p.39)

"If we want to know our place in chronology, our position in the march of events, look at Israel." (William Blackstone, Jesus is Coming, p. 234)

To properly understand Scripture, especially when it comes to the distinctions between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant, it is vital to see God's unique dealings with O.T. Israel as contrasted with His dealings with the N.T. Church.

Consistent use of a literal or normal interpretation of Scripture "leads dispensationalism to distinguish God's program for Israel from His program for the church. Thus the church did not begin in the Old Testament but on the day of Pentecost, and the church is not presently fulfilling promises made to Israel in the Old Testament that have not yet been fulfilled. The church is not seen as the replacement or the fulfillment of Israel." (David Burggraff, A Growing Difficulty for Modern Dispensationalism, A Workshop, CBTS, Lansdale, PA, p.3)

### The distinction between O.T. Israel and the N.T. Church:

| O.T. ISRAEL | N.T. CHURCH |
|---|---|
| • **Earthly Blessings** (A Land on Earth) (Gen.12:1; Dt. 8:7-9)<br>• Principles of **Conduct** (Unique Civil & Ceremonial Laws)<br>• **Unique Worship**<br>1. One Place (the Temple)<br>2. Human Priests<br>3. Animal Sacrifices | • **Spiritual Blessings** (in Heaven) (Phil. 3:20; Mt. 5:39)<br>• Principles of **Conduct** (the Royal Law of Love)<br>• **Unique Worship**<br>1. In Spirit (Jn. 4:24)<br>2. One High Priest (One Mediator - 1 Tim.2:5)<br>3. One Sacrifice (Heb.10:4, 9-14) |

# V. Dispensationalism as it relates to Salvation

In every dispensation Salvation has never been based on man's works, but always on God's grace.

**A. God's Means of Justification by grace, through faith is Not New News**

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; *Romans 3:21 (KJV)*

"The righteousness of God" = the righteousness that God gives; the righteousness that comes from God.

This message is not a new discovery on the part of Paul. This good news is not a novelty exclusive to Paul (as ultradispensationalists would hold).

Paul is saying that his message is not new. The Law itself spoke of a righteousness that came to man not by law-keeping but from God. The prophets foretold the same (cp. Ro. 1:2; Acts 10:43).

- "**Noah** found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen. 6:8).
- **Abraham** "believed in the LORD, and He (the LORD) counted it to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6; cp. Ro. 4:3; Gal. 3:6).
- Even **Moses** was not justified by the Law which he delivered to Israel, but he also found grace in God (Ex. 33:17).
- King **David** on numerous occasions said that he was justified by the mercy of God (Ps. 130:2, 3; Ps. 51:1f)

  Ps. 51:1 - "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."

  Rom. 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works
- **Isaiah** said, "Surely . . . in the LORD have I righteousness" (Is. 45:24).

  Is. 45:25 - "In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."

  Is. 53:11 - "He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

Obviously, a righteousness that came apart from the Law had to exist, because the Law was not given until 1400 B.C. If righteousness only came by the Mosaic Law, everyone who died previous to the giving of that Law would be in Hell now!

The Law revealed its own inadequacy to justify. It showed that sin could not be taken away permanently by the need of continual sacrifices (Heb. 10).

**Jesus is the only Savior for All Ages**

*Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of **sins that are past**, through the forbearance of God;*
*To declare, I say, **at this time** his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*
*Romans 3:25-26 (KJV)*

That which Christ accomplished on the cross met the righteous demands of God both for those who lived in the "past" (B.C. - v. 25b) and present ("this time" - the now season - A.D. - v. 26a).

The question would naturally come to mind, if Christ died in the first century A.D. for sinners, what was the means of forgiveness for the O.T. saints? How could God declare them righteous (EX: Abraham) when Christ had not paid for their sins yet?

How could God remit (pass over) the sins committed previously? How could God forbear?
ANSWER: God saved the O.T. saint because of the payment His Son would make in the future.
They were **saved "on credit"**
EX: How many people can purchase things without having actual cash on hand. The credit card company trusts you to cover the expense at a later time.

God could forgive and justify Old Testament saints because in His mind payment was as good as already made. Christ was so certain to die that He is called: "The lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

Peter said that we are redeemed with . . . "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

God's only means of salvation for all time periods is Christ!

How could God pronounce the unrighteous "righteous" and still be just? How can God justify the ungodly? Rom. 4:5

Payment had to be made! The question is, Who would pay? Could man pay? NO!

God would be guilty of injustice if He ever allowed a lawbreaker to go free ("off the hook") without the crime being paid for. Since His Law declares: "the soul that sinneth it shall die"; "the wages of sin is death" (Ro. 6:23); sin had to be paid for before it could be forgiven.

**B. God's Means of Justification is <u>Consistent with His Law</u>**

*Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:
Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.
Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.
*Romans 3:29-31 (KJV)*

**V. 29**
If justification was by the works of the Law, then only those who had a copy of the Law and lived in or near Israel (the Temple) could be saved.
Salvation is not only for Jews but for Gentiles as well. God is their creator and Savior as well.

**V. 31**
If justification is not by the keeping of the Mosaic Law, does this mean the Law is worthless? No. Rather, justification by faith <u>holds up</u> the Law. It <u>makes</u> the Law <u>stand</u> up even more powerfully. The purpose of the O.T. Law (v. 20) was to show man the need for justification apart from itself.

Salvation by grace through faith actually allows the Law to fulfill God's intention when He gave it - namely, to condemn man so he would cry out to God for His grace.

Those who believed in salvation by the works of the Law are the ones who actually tear down the Law.

They must re-define and change the true intention of God's commands in order to convince themselves that they are keeping His Law.

Salvation has always been ...
- by <u>grace</u> alone
- through <u>faith</u> alone
- based on <u>Christ's sacrifice</u> alone!

*Galatians 1:8*
*"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."*

# VI. Dispensationalism as it Relates to <u>Covenant Theology</u>

A. Definition:

1. A system of viewing the entire Scripture comprising three overall covenants.

2. It is a system of thought which affirms that God's redemptive dealings with men are governed by certain covenants between (1) the persons of the Godhead and (2) the Godhead and men.

3. The chief exponents of this system of theology have been found in the Reformed tradition

B. History

1. 1570 - Olivanus developed a theological system in which he dealt with a determinative covenant within the Godhead.

2. 1648 - Cocceius really put the system together

3. In the 1640's, this idea of covenants was placed into the Westminster Confession of Faith.

4. 1685 - Witsius enlarged, systematized, and developed and clarified the system

5. In the 1980's, Harold Camping began promoting Covenant Theology on Family Radio

C. Tenants (beliefs)

1. Covenant of Redemption

   a. In eternity past, God made a covenant with Christ. God decided who would be the elect (and this covenant <u>bound</u> them).

   b. This covenant obligated God to provide for the incarnation of Christ, the vicarious death, victorious resurrection, and efficacious drawing (by grace) of the Holy Spirit for the elect.

   c. This was called a "determinative covenant" (Eph. 1:4).

2. Covenant of Works

    a. God entered into a covenant relationship with Adam and promised eternal life if he obeyed and eternal death if he disobeyed.
    b. Life was promised for perfect obedience.

3. Covenant of Grace

    a. God and Christ offered salvation to man
    b. The sinner must accept the agreement by believing in Jesus Christ.
    c. Genesis 3:16 reveals this covenant in embryo form
    d. All other covenants are just part of this Covenant of Grace. All believers of all ages are in a "community."

D. A Refutation of Covenant Theology

1. It applies a dual hermeneutic
    a. Literal at some points
    b. Allegorical in passages of prophecy (but remember, prophets and apostles viewed Scripture literally)

2. It utilizes an improper division of Scripture (three covenants are not in the Bible)

3. It views all Biblical covenants as varying expressions of the Covenant of Grace

4. It makes the Church the fulfillment of Israel (artificial, typological interpretation - allegory)

5. It portrays an improper connection between circumcision and infant baptism (leading to an unregenerate church membership)

6. It interprets the Old Testament <u>by</u> the New Testament (it reads the New Testament back into the Old Testament)

7. It employs artificial exegesis (the hermeneutic is faulty as it constantly allows for the subjectivity of the interpreter)

8. Its origin is reason. There is NO Biblical text which justifies the three “Covenants” upon which this system is built.

E. The Key Difference between Covenant Theology and Dispensationalism:

1. Dispensationalism emphasizes progress of revelation in stages - unity of purpose yet diversity in unfolding it.

2. Covenant Theology emphasizes complete unity - does not permit diversity

**Opposition to Dispensationalism**

A. Liberalism

1. Progressive revelation is senseless to them

2. They hold that there is no absolute, final and infallible revelation from God

3. They believe that there is a spark of divinity in all men

4. They deny the truth that man is a fallen creature

5. The lesson of the ages that proves the utter failure of man under all tests is of no interest to them

6. They deny inspiration

B. Amillennialism

1. Sarcastic in its attack

2. Glories in the creedal declaration of its church, with a marked unwillingness to subject its views to a direct test of Scripture. They interpret Scripture by their creeds.

3. Outlook tends to be philosophical and logical. Sometimes this colors the consideration of the Word of God as the only court of appeal.

4. It rejects the truth of a definite actual place in God's future plan for Israel (believes that the Church fulfills and replaces Israel; Israel & Church are interchangeable terms; baptism replaces circumcision)

5. It views no unique place for the church in God's program

# VII. Dispensationalism as it relates to Ultra-Dispensationalism

The term "Ultra-dispenationalism" or "Hyper-dispensationalism" simply refers to a system of theology with takes a dispensational view of Scripture to an extreme (an unBiblical extreme which leads the Bible interpreter to arrive at erroneous conclusions and actually affects both one's preaching of the N.T. and Practice).

## A. A Succinct Look at What Ultradispensationalists Believe:

1. Ultradispensationalists believe that **the Church did NOT begin** on the day of **Pentecost**

   - E.W. Bullinger* (1837-1913) (who some call the originator of ultradispensationalism) put the Gospels and the book of Acts under the Dispensation of the Law and commenced the Church Age with the ministry of Paul in Acts 28:28.
   - Other ultradispensationalists* place the origin of the Church at Acts 9 (Paul's conversion) or Acts 13 (Paul's turning to the Gentiles)
   - Many others believe the Church started sometime after Pentecost, but are unsure when.
   - Others teach that a "church of the Jews" began at Pentecost and a distinct Church ("church of the Gentiles"/Body of Christ) started when the "mystery" of the grace of God was revealed to Paul.

   *Note: Not all ultradispensationalists follow the details of Bullinger on every point. Some of the proponents of this position include: Cornelius Stam (author of: "Things that differ"); Charles Baker, and Robert Brock.
   *It should also be noted that no ultradispensationalist calls himself an ultradispensationalist. They would prefer to refer to themselves as Pauline Dispensationalists.

2. Ultradispensationalists believe that the "church" Jesus mentioned in Matthew 16:18 and Matthew 18:17 is **NOT the Church of this Age**.

   *Mt 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*
   *Mt 18:17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.*

3. Ultradispensationalists believe that "the Great Commission" in the Gospels (ex. Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15) is the Kingdom commission which has been temporarily set aside until God resumes His program with Israel. **It is not our great Commission**. Our Great Commission is in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 and in Ephesians 3:9.

4. Ultradispensationalists believe that no one but God knew anything about the Church of this Age until after **Paul** was saved and **the "Mystery" was revealed to him**.

   This understanding is based primarily on these Scriptures:
   And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of **the mystery** (which is Jew and Gentile together in one body), which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:
   *Ephesians 3:9 (KJV)*

   Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to **my gospel**, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was **kept secret** since the world began,
   *Romans 16:25 (KJV)*

5. Ultradispensationalists believe that just as the Church was a mystery, the promised **"Rapture"** (for the Church only) is a mystery. It can **only be found in Paul's epistles**, to whom God revealed the Mystery.

   They would contend that these Scriptures do NOT refer to the Rapture of the Church:
   *John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*
   *Matthew 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (cp. Mk. 13:27)*
   *Matthew 24:40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.*

6. Ultradispensationalists believe that **Paul is our Apostle** of the Body of Christ, and that only in Paul's epistles can we find the Doctrine of Today's Church.

   This would mean that we (the Church) cannot preach verses like John 3:16 etc. because that was a "Kingdom Gospel" not intended for the church to preach.

7. Ultradispensationalists believe that **water baptism has no place** at all in this present dispensation.

## B. A Refutation of Ultradispensationalism

### 1. Christ prepared for the Church

a. The life of Christ as recorded in the gospels covers a period of transition from the Dispensation of Law to the Church Age

- John 1:17 - "the law came by Moses but grace and truth by Jesus Christ" (cp. Rom. 6:14)
- Mt. 5 - "It was said. . . but I say unto you"
- Lk. 5:36-39 - new teaching cannot be contained in the old forms of the Law
- Mt. 5:17 - Jesus fulfilled or completed the Law and brought it to an end (Rom. 10:4)

b. Mt. 16:18 - "I will build" - future tense (universal church)
Mt. 18:17 - "Take it to the church" (local church)

### 2. The Cross made the Church possible

Eph. 2:11-20 - God has accepted Jews and Gentiles into one Body ever since the cross

### 3. Pentecost began the Church

a. No reason why the Church should have been delayed after the four age-transforming events took place:

- Christ's death
- Christ's resurrection
- Christ's ascension to become the church's Head
- The Holy Spirit's advent

Note: Absolutely none of Joel 2:28-32 was fulfilled at Pentecost, and tongues were never mentioned in Joel.

b. Acts 2:47 - "The Lord added to the church daily" Also: Acts 5:11, 14

# THE LIFELINE OF THE CHURCH





**THE O.T.** | **THE NEW TESTAMENT GOSPELS** *(A Time of Transition)* [ **THE CHURCH AGE** ]

1) The Church in **"Seed"** form

2) The Church is **"Conceived"** by means of the Cross

3) The Church is ***"Born"*** at Pentecost

4) The Church **"Matures"** throughout the Book of Acts (ch. 3ff)

5) The Church is **"Taken away"** at the Rapture --"The Dead in Christ rise first"

***Preparation**
For the Church by John the Baptist (Mt. 11:12-13; Lk. 16:16)

***Prediction**
Of the Church by Jesus Christ (Mt. 16:18; 18:15-17)

***Provision**
The Church is made possible by the death and resurrection of Christ (Eph. 2:13-16)

***Initiation**
The Church begins with the advent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2; 11:15; I Cor. 12:13)

***Development**
The Church grows to maturity through the Word of God (Eph. 4:11-16)

***Departure**
The Church is caught away (I Th. 4:13-18)

NOTE: The Church was eternally in the plan of God (Eph. 3:11) but did not begin until Pentecost. Ever since Pentecost, the Lord has "added to the Church daily" (Acts 2:47; 5:11, 14).

**4. Paul persecuted the Church**

a. He was a member of the same church that he once tried to destroy
b. Also called "the way" (Acts 9:2, 19:23, 22:4, 24:14)
c. Gal. 1:13 - Paul once persecuted the church to destroy it; Gal. 1:23 - Paul now preached the faith he once tried to destroy
d. 1 Cor. 15:1-11; *v. 9, *v. 11
e. Phil. 3:6; cp. Acts 8:3

**5. The Apostles *(Not just Paul)* were the Foundation layers of the Church**
(1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 2:20)

**6. Israel was rejected (laid aside as a nation) before the book of Acts**
(Rom. 11:17-24)

When was Israel cast aside temporarily?

a. In God's mind, before Babylonian captivity (Dan. 9:20-27)
b. Midway through Christ's ministry, Jesus demonstrated Israel's rejection
   1) By speaking in parables (Mt. 13:10-15)
   2) By His message in the parables (Mt. 21:33-45)
   (rejected stone-cornerstone - Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:7)
c. When the middle wall of partition was broken down (Eph. 2:13-14) and when God made no difference between the Jew and the Greek (Rom. 10:12; Acts 15:9; Col. 3:11) -- which occurred at the cross
d. The gift of tongues was the sign of God's judgment on Israel (1 Cor. 14:22)

**7. Peter was made aware that God had accepted Gentiles**

a. Should have occurred at Great Commission
"All nations" (Lk. 24:47; Mt. 28); "every creature" (Mk. 16); "unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).
Jesus even said, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold" (Jn. 10:16-17; cp. Eph. 2:16-17 - "one flock"/ "one shepherd")

b. But did not occur until direct revelation from God - Acts 10
Acts 11:17 - "What was I that I could withstand God"
Acts 15:7-9 - "No difference" - same definition as "mystery"

c. When Peter compromised, he was openly rebuked because he already knew better (Gal. 2:11-14)

**8. Paul's message was exactly the same as Peter's**

a. Paul's message:
- Death, burial and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:1-4)
- Salvation is in Christ alone (Rom. 6:23)
- Salvation aspects of the kingdom (Acts 28:31; 1 Th. 2:12; Col. 1:13)
- Jews and Gentiles are accepted without partiality and are equally united by having the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:14-18)

*This mystery was revealed to Paul by direct revelation (Gal. 1:12)

b. Peter's message:
- Death, burial and resurrection (Acts 2:31,35; 3:15; 4:33, etc.)
- Salvation is in Christ alone (Acts 4:12)
- Salvation aspects of the kingdom (2 Pet. 1:11)
- Jews and Gentiles are accepted without partiality and are equally united by having the Holy Spirit (Acts 15:8-9)

*This mystery was revealed to Peter by direct revelation (Acts 10)
Note: Anyone who preached another Gospel was to be accursed (Gal. 1:8)

**9. The Mystery is revealed**

a. Was kept secret (Rom. 16:25)

b. Hid in God (Eph. 3:9)

c. Definition: Eph. 3:6 - Gentiles should be fellow heirs
1) Mystery - blindness to Israel (Rom. 11:25)
2) Mystery - the Gospel (Eph. 6:19; Col. 1:27)
3) Mystery - relationship between Bride and Christ (Eph. 5:22-33)
4) Mystery - Rapture-Resurrection and change from corruption to incorruption (1 Cor. 15:51-57)

**The "Mystery" was given but in a concealed fashion in the O.T. It was revealed in the N.T.** It was not merely revealed to and through Paul. He was one of the revealers of the Mystery, but not the exclusive one.

Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,
But now is made manifest, and **by the scriptures of the prophets**, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:
*Romans 16:25-26 (KJV)*

**10. Paul received direct revelation but no distinctive message**

a. Paul did not receive his teaching from the apostles (Gal. 1:12)
b. He went to Jerusalem to make sure he had been preaching the same thing they were (Gal. 2:2)
c. Stewardship given to Paul (1 Cor. 9:17; Col. 1:25)
d. Direct revelation of mystery - Eph. 3:3 - emphasis is on <u>revelation</u> not <u>me</u>

*God revealed to ALL apostles (Eph. 3:5)

**11. Paul's mission was to the Gentiles**

a. Gal. 2:7 - "to Gentiles" *v. 8, 9 "unto"
b. Not two different Gospels but two recipients - cp. Acts 26:16-18
c. Paul did not want anyone to say "I am of Paul" or "I am of Cephas" (1 Cor. 1:12)

**12. God gave apostles for the Body of Christ**

a. They knew the mystery (cp. 1 Cor. 3:22 with 1 Cor. 4:1; Eph. 3:5)
b. They were given by God to equip the saints so that the Body of Christ might be edified (Eph. 4:11-12)

**13. The Spirit baptism which began at Pentecost forms the Church**

a. Prophesied by John the Baptist (Mt. 3:11)
b. Promised by Jesus Christ (Acts 1:5)
   1) Jesus Christ is the only One mentioned to baptize <u>with</u> the Holy Spirit (note 1 Cor. 12:13) "By" is the Greek word "*en*" which primarily means "in" or "into." Same word is in both Mt. 3:11 and Acts 1:5.
   2) 1 Cor. 12:13b - Believers were caused to drink (aorist passive) into one Spirit (cp. Jn. 7:37-39 for same imagery)
   3) Spirit was promised to be "in" believers (Jn. 14:17), which would cause believers to be "in Christ" (v. 20)
c. Fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2)
d. Continued throughout the book of Acts with signs (tongues) accompanying (Acts 8:14-17; 10:44-48; 19:1-6)
e. Restated and defined by Paul (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:5)

**14. The Principle of the "New Testament" or "New Covenant" like a modern will, does into effect right after the death of the testator (the one who made the will).**

It's benefits are shared in right after Christ died!

For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.
For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

# VIII. Dispensationalism as it Relates to "Progressive Dispensationalism"

Proponents of this view: Darrell L. Bock of Dallas Theological Seminary
Craig A. Blaising (formerly of Dallas Theological Seminary)
Robert L. Saucy of Talbot Theological Seminary

Definition:

Views the dispensations "not simply as different arrangements between God and humankind, but as successive arrangements in the progressive revelation and accomplishment of REDEMPTION."

The theme of redemption is the link throughout all of human history (According to Progressive Dispensationalists).

Progressive Dispensationalists:

1. Advocate a holistic and unified view of eternal salvation (all the redeemed share the same salvation with respect to justification and sanctification)

2. Church is not viewed as a separate category (as "Israel" or "Gentiles" would be); rather, the church is all of redeemed humanity in this present dispensation (True).

   The "Mystery" of the church does not imply that the church was unrevealed in the Old Testament, but only that it was unrealized.

   "A Jew who becomes a Christian today does not lose his or her relationship to Israel's future promises." (whereas, normal Dispensationalists see a distinction between the future heavenly promises for Jewish Christians and the earthly promises for national Israel in the Millennium, but progressives do not).

3. The promises of the Abrahamic, Davidic and New Covenants are already inaugurated and beginning to be fulfilled.

   Christ is already reigning in heaven on the throne of David (thus merging the Church with the Davidic Covenant & kingdom). This is the error of allowing the New Testament to introduce changes and additions to Old Testament revelation, in the effort to make the overall purpose of God to be redemptive.

Basic Tenets:

1) Kingdom of God is the unifying theme of biblical history

The Church is called a "sneak preview" of the kingdom and an "outpost" of the God's heavenly kingdom.

2) Four dispensational eras

## THE DISPENSATIONS OF PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISM

| PATRIARCHAL | MOSAIC | ECCLESIAL | ZIONIC | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Adam to Sinai** | **Sinai to Ascension of Messiah** | **Ascension to Second Coming** | **Part 1: Millennium** | **Part 2: Eternal State** |

Note: To lump pre-Fall conditions, post-Fall conditions, and the Abrahamic covenant under a common stewardship or dispensation is perhaps artificial.

3) Christ has <u>already</u> inaugurated the Davidic reign in heaven (not on earth until the Millennium)

Progressive dispensationalists use the "Already/Not Yet" method in their reasoning.

i.e. - Christ is "already" reigning in regard to salvation but "not yet" reigining literally on earth (not until Millennium)

"Right hand of the throne of God" = the throne of David in heaven (Acts 2 - 3; Ps. 132:11; Acts 2:30; Psalm 110)

> The Lord hath sworn *in* truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.
> *Psalms 132:11 (KJV)*

> Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;
> *Acts 2:30 (KJV)*

Because Christ is at the "right hand of the throne of God," this must mean that He is now reigning in fulfillment of the Davidic covenant

4) The New Covenant has already been inaugurated, although the blessings will not be fully realized until the Millennium

The New Covenant is already inaugurated by Christ, although not all provisions are fully realized yet.

Acts 3:19 - 21 - "times of refreshing" and "restoration of all things":

"Times of refreshing" refers to the present time ("already"); "restoration of all things" refers to the future return of Christ ("not yet").

We would say that the New Covenant definitely has already been paid for (on the cross), but has not yet been fulfilled or inaugurated.

5) The Church should not be kept completely distinct from Israel; the idea of two purposes and two peoples of God is invalid

6) The New Testament makes complementary changes to Old Testament promises without eliminating the original promises (thus, they advocate a "complementary" hermeneutic alongside a literal hermeneutic).

7) There is one divine plan of holistic redemption for all people.

This professor sees Progressive Dispensationalism as an attempt to bring balance between Dispensationalism and the whole of Scripture. It does not fall into the trap of artificially dividing up Scripture to the point of making unwarranted lines of demarcation. I do not think that they are seeking to compromise with Covenant Theology as a whole.

# 6 Bible Answers to the Charismatic Movement: An Expositional Study of I Corinthians 12-14

# How the HOLY SPIRIT Works

**(Part 1)**

## I Corinthians 12:1-31

Basic Outline:

*** Do not be ignorant about how the Holy Spirit works!**

*How do I discern whether a message, gift, or movement is a work of the Holy Spirit or not?*
Take a look at the product of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit Preaches...

**I. A SINGULAR Message (v.2-3)**

*When the Holy Spirit speaks...*

A. His message is CONSISTENT (Never contradictory to His nature, His ways or His Word)

B. His message is CHRIST-CENTERED (Never promoting anyone except Jesus Christ)

The Holy Spirit Provides...

**II. A VARIETY of Gifts (v.4-11)**

A. Spiritual Gifts come from a common source (v.4-6)

B. Spiritual Gifts come for a common good (v.7)

C. Spiritual Gifts come through a common Spirit (v.8-11)

1. The Holy Spirit gives the Gifts (v.8-10)
2. The Holy Spirit operates the Gifts (v.11a)
3. The Holy Spirit determines the Gifts (v.11b)

The Holy Spirit Produces...

**III. A UNIFIED Church Body (v.12-31)**

Introduction: (Romans 12:1)
Praise God for the blessed Holy Spirit!

## The Names and Titles of the Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit - Lk. 11:13; Ro. 1:4
2. The Holy Ghost - Matthew 28:19 ["Ghost" and "Spirit" are the same Greek word]
3. The Spirit of God - II Chron. 15:1; Gen. 1:2; I Cor. 3:16
4. My Spirit - Gen. 6:3; Joel 2:28, 29; Mt. 12:18
5. The Spirit of the Lord - Isaiah 11:2; II Chron. 20:14
6. The Spirit of Holiness - Psalm 51:11; Rom. 1:4
7. The Spirit of Wisdom - Isaiah 11:2
8. The Spirit of Counsel - Isaiah 11:2
9. The Spirit of Understanding - Isaiah 11:2
10. The Spirit of Supplication - Zech. 12:10
11. The Spirit of Truth - John 14:17
12. The Spirit of Comfort - John 14:26
13. The Spirit of Life - Romans 8:2
14. The Spirit of Adoption - Romans 8:15
15. The Spirit of Faith - II Cor. 4:13
16. The Spirit of Love - II Tim. 1:7
17. The Spirit of Might - II Tim. 1:7
18. The Spirit of love, might, and a sound mind - II Tim. 1:7
19. The Spirit of Revelation - Ephes. 1:17
20. The Spirit of Power - Eph. 3:20; Rom. 15:13
21. The Spirit of Eternity or the Eternal Spirit - Heb. 9:14
22. The Spirit of Grace - Heb. 10:29
23. The Spirit of Glory - I Pet. 1:17; I Pet. 4:14

## The Works of the Holy Spirit

a. He is responsible for creation (Job 33:4)
b. He is responsible for the inspiration of Scripture (He "bore men along" in the production of God's Word - I Pet. 1:21).
c. He performed undeniable sign miracles
    1) Virgin birth (Lk. 1:35)
    2) Caught away Philip (Acts 8:39)
    3) Signs and miracles through Apostles (Rom. 15:19)
    4) He reveals prophecy (Acts 2:17-18)
d. He convicts men of sin, righteousness, and judgment (Jn. 16:8)
e. He regenerates, imparting a Godly nature to a fallen man when he places his faith in God's Word (Jn. 3:5-6; Titus 3:5)
f. He unites believers to the Body of Christ (I Cor. 12:13)
g. He comforts as Jesus could comfort (Jn. 14:16)
h. He intercedes (prays) for God's people (Rom. 8:26, 27)
i. He sanctifies the yielded child of God (II Thes. 2:13)
j. He imparts life (Jn. 6:63; Rom. 8:11); He is the direct cause of resurrection (cp. I Pet. 3:18)
k. He seals believers (Eph. 4:30)

**Romans 12:1**

***"Spiritual gifts"*** **-** lit. "the spirituals" or "spiritual matters" (a major part of which included the "gifts," hence the KJV italicized insertion).

Paul in this chapter intends to straighten out the confused Corinthians about the true working of the Holy Spirit.

The tone of I Corinthians 12 - 14 is corrective in nature (he does not condone all that went on at the church in Corinth, but did correct them in love).

Chapters 12, 13, and 14 are one big unit of thought dealing with one theme: Namely, the gifts given to God's people by the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 12 - The diversity and unity produced by the gifts of the Spirit
Chapter 13 - The supremacy of love over the spiritual gifts
Chapter 14 - The supremacy of the gift of prophecy over tongues

We are commanded to:

--*"test the spirits"* (I Jn. 4:1 - *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world")*
--*"prove* (test) *all things"* (II Th. 5:21)

We (as believers) can be ignorant about many things in life (EX: geometry, the distance from earth to mars), but we cannot be ignorant about spiritual matters (I.e. how the Holy Spirit operates). Reason: God warned of spiritual deception in the Last Days (Mt. 24:24; I Tim. 4:1).

Spiritual ignorance is: --Dangerous (II Cor. 11:14; II Cor. 2:11)
--Inexcusable (we have God's Spirit within and God's Word on our bookshelf)

Recent trends in churches:

1) Visions, dreams, new revelations
2) "Holy Laughter" (Prov. 17:22)
3) "Holy barking" (*"Howl ye"* - Is. 13:6; Jer. 25:34) and "holy crying"
4) "Holy shaking" and being "slain in the Spirit"

Are these actions manifestations of the Holy Spirit or the orchestrations of Satan?

## * Do not be ignorant about how the Holy Spirit works!

*How do I discern whether a message, gift, or movement is a work of the Holy Spirit or not?*
Take a look at the product of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit Preaches...

# I. A SINGULAR Message (v.2-3)

**V. 2**

***"Gentiles"*** **-** polytheistic pagans, idolatrous heathen

***"Carried away"*** **-** Before salvation the Corinthians were (past tense) influenced by and led astray by voiceless idols which supposedly delivered messages which captivated the minds and controlled the lives of the devotees.

"The verb is often used of leading away a prisoner or condemned person" (EX: Mk. 14:44, 15:16) (Morris, p. 167).

They would lead the blind, ignorant idolaters in one direction at one point and then switch gears and lead them somewhere else the next.

It didn't matter if the messages were contradictory. All that mattered was that the followers yield their mind, body and will to the whims and wishes of the mute idols. Hence, all their lives they were *"blown about by every wind of doctrine by the sleight of man"* (Eph. 4:14).

**V. 3**

Paul is saying: The Holy Spirit will never say, "Jesus is cursed"; and then turn around and say "Jesus is Lord." The Holy Spirit will always speak a consistent message.

***When the Holy Spirit speaks...***

## A. His message is CONSISTENT (Never contradictory to His nature, His ways or His Word) V. 3

The Holy Spirit today speaks through one means: The Scriptures

(*"The Sword of the Spirit"* - He fights with it [Eph. 6:17] and operates on us with it [Heb. 4:12]).

The Spirit authored the Bible (Jn. 14:26; II Pet. 1:21)
The Spirit illuminates our minds to the Bible (Heb. 10:32; I Cor. 2:10)
The Spirit teaches the Bible (Jn. 16:13; I Jn. 2:20)

His Will NEVER contradicts His Word.

The Spirit will never lead anyone to violate the Bible.

One reason I know for fact that the ecumenical Catholic Charismatic renewal and the "Name It/Claim it" prosperity movement and the "Faith movement" are not from God's Spirit is because in doctrine and practice these movements violate Scripture.

The more you know the "*truth*" the more *"free"* you will be (Jn. 8:32).

**B. His message is <u>CHRIST-CENTERED</u> (Never promoting anyone except Jesus Christ)**

**V. 3**

***"Jesus is the Lord" -*** A bold truth asserting Christ deity (as God), sovereignty (as ruler) and authority (as Master of our lives).

Only the Holy Spirit can illuminate people's minds to the Lordship of Christ, and this is what He does best.

The Holy Spirit's central message surrounds the person and work of Jesus Christ (Jn. 16:13-14 - *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.")*

Any church where the teaching and preaching continuously focuses on the Holy Spirit is <u>NOT</u> a Holy-Spirit-filled church.

The first test we must give every message we hear is the Doctrinal Test.

If the preacher/teacher holds a derogatory view of Jesus Christ, it may be a spirit guiding him, but it is not the Holy Spirit.

Sad to say, multitudes of professing Christians today pay more attention to the charisma of the speaker than to his content; excitement rather than exactness; flash rather than faithfulness to the facts of the test.

## The Holy Spirit Provides...

## II. A <u>VARIETY</u> of Gifts (v.4-11)

**V. 4**

***"Gifts" -*** *charismaton -*

*charis* = grace
*ma* = the result of
*ton* = several (plural)

All of God's gifts are the <u>results of His grace</u>. You don't deserve them, can't earn them, and can't buy them (Acts 8:20).

Many times a "gift" is nothing more than a crucified talent - a talent you had before salvation which now you can use for God's glory.

The Holy Spirit energizes and re-channels such abilities for the spiritual profit of many other believers.

In most cases our gifts have nothing to do with natural ability (as the unsaved have such talent), but gifts that were non-existent or at least dormant and unawakened prior to salvation. At salvation came the gift of eternal life and the gift(s) for this present life.

The Corinthians had a problem with lusting after the spectacular gifts, the popular gifts, the public eye-catching gifts, the flashy gifts.

***"Diversities" =*** varieties; different kinds.
The Holy Spirit is not in the business of "cloning" people when it comes to His gift-giving.
We ought to be alike in the areas of morals and vital Bible doctrines. We ought to be clones of Christ-likeness in our attitudes and actions.
However, we ought to be different when it comes to particular skills, talents, and abilities (EX: how children have unique personality differences, preferential tastes, and personal skills).

***"Diversities" -*** Can you imagine what life would be like if we all did the same thing, had the same skills and talents, were all spiritual clones?
Life would be boring and quite burdensome. Why? Because no one could balance out and make up for mankind's shortcomings.
Christianity would be tasteless, if we were all the same "flavor."
It would be dull, if we were all the same "color."
Diversities in food is what makes eating so enjoyable ... Diversities in color is what makes for contrast and complement ... Diversities in gifts is what makes the Body of Christ so exciting and useful.
No one's needs would be met if we did not have unique differences.
We are not Xerox copies, printed sheets; rather, we are individually hand-crafted uniquely by God.

## A. Spiritual Gifts come from a common source (v.4-6)

**V. 4**
***"The same Spirit" -*** When you go to a supermarket, you find a variety of products, from a variety of manufacturers. In a church, you find a variety of gifts from a single "manufacturer" - The Holy Spirit.

**V. 5**
***"Administrations" -*** *(diakonion* - akin to "deacon") -- ministries; service
There are many different ways to minister:
--teaching, preaching, counseling, witnessing, singing
--helping, caring, calling, hospitality
--nursery, Sunday school, Jr. Church, AWANA
--building (construction), translating, overseeing, playing instruments, preparing food, cleaning, ETC.

**V. 6**
***"Operations"*** **-** The outcome of God's working; the effects, results, or products produced by the Father's energy or power.
So the source of every gift, and of every service using that gifts, and of every result of that service is credited to God alone.

The source is not Bible College or Seminary [God employs them]; nor is it your own power, insight, or charisma. As Paul said, *"By the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me"* (I Cor. 15:10).

***"Worketh all in all" -*** God energizes every gift and empowers every act of service so that the outcome can only be attributed to Him.

***"Worketh all in all" -*** God is not only the power behind every gift and service; but He is also the only source of empowerment for all the workers themselves (no worker for God can take the credit or glory; it goes to God alone!)
Therefore, do we have any right to boast or brag? Any reason for pride or arrogance?
When the Holy Spirit does the work, He will see to it that the glory goes Heavenward not to flesh and blood.

Incidentally, Paul indicates the Trinity by referring to the "Spirit" (*"Holy Spirit"* - v. 4), the "Lord" (*"Jesus Christ"* - v. 5), and "God" ("*the Father"* - v. 6).

## B. Spiritual Gifts come for a common good (v.7)

***"...given to every man" -*** Every believer should have a manifestation of the Spirit; the Spirit has equipped each and every believer with at least one gift. He wants you to use it for Him.
What gift has He given you? Are you using it?

***"To profit withal" -*** God gave each one of us gifts for the purpose of everyone's profit or spiritual benefit.
No spiritual gift was ever meant for self profit alone. God's gifts are not toys to entertain ourselves with, nor are they cards to play solitaire with. Your gifts were meant for others; specifically, other believers!
"A gift exercised in private (or for private benefit) is a perverted gift" (MacArthur, p. 292).
"They are not for individual enjoyment, but for corporate employment" (Wiersbe, p. 608).

## C. Spiritual Gifts come through a common Spirit (v.8-11)

### 1. The Holy Spirit gives the Gifts (v.8-10)

**V. 8**

Note the key thought in vv. 8-11:
*"Given by the Spirit. . . by the same Spirit* (v. 8) . . . *by the same Spirit* (two times in v. 9) . . . *"the selfsame Spirit* (v. 11)"

***"The word of wisdom"*** **-** An ability to communicate practical solutions to life's problems

***"The word of knowledge"*** **-** an ability to communicate Bible truths, theological facts and doctrines.

***"Faith"*** **-** All believers have faith or else you wouldn't be saved; however, some are endowed with a special dose of faith whereby they are not afraid to attempt great things for God.

**V. 9**

***"Healing"*** **-** A miraculous ability to cure people with various sicknesses, including restoration to life (Acts 9:40, 20:12) (as Jesus, Peter, and Paul did).

**V. 10**

***"Miracles"*** **-** Supernatural powers (like those mentioned in Mark 16:17-20).

***"Prophecy"*** **-** The ability to foretell and/or forthtell a message from God (EX: Agabus [Acts 11:28 - *"And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar"*]).

***"Discerning of spirits"*** **-** The supernatural ability to distinguish between evil spirits and God's Spirit in people (EX: Peter to Simon, Acts 8:23; Paul to Elymas the Sorcerer, Acts 13:6ff).

***"Tongues"*** (*glosson*) - a supernatural ability to speak in foreign languages unknown to the speaker, but known somewhere in the world (Acts 2:4-11). This gift was the most coveted by the Corinthians, as evident by the volume of ink Paul gives it in chapters 12 - 14.

***"Interpretation of tongues"*** **-** A supernatural ability to orally translate a foreign language you never studied before. This gift was a companion gift to speaking in tongues (I Cor. 14:27).

Paul includes "tongues" last in the list here, as also in verse 30, evidently for two reasons:

1) The Corinthians always put it first
2) Tongues was not the priority gift

The Corinthians tested each others' spirituality (like Pentecostals and Charismatics do today) and judged each other with the test question: "Do you speak in tongues?" If not, they implied that you did not have the witness of the Holy Spirit within you (DeHaan, p. 142). However, even at Corinth it was evident that not all spoke in tongues (12:30).

The first list of mentioned gifts (v. 8-9a) are apparently distinct from the second list of gifts (v. 9b-10). The first list are service gifts whereas the second list are sign gifts.

Paul by no means gifts a complete list of the Spirit's gifts (other gifts are mentioned in I Cor. 12:28-30; Rom. 12:3-8; Eph. 4:7-11).

It is my conviction that all mentioned gifts are operative today except the "sign gifts" (SEE: Mark 16:17ff). The sign gifts were temporary as they introduced to the world God's new message and apostolic messengers (II Cor. 12:12). We should not seek after signs of any type (Mt. 12:39; 16:4).

--No sign or sign gift in the Bible was permanent.

A sign's purpose is to display God's new and direct intervention in the world during times when written revelation was either being given or fulfilled.

Examples of temporary signs:
--The signs which Moses performed before Pharaoh's court were temporary.
--The signs Christ performed were temporary.
--The signs the Apostles performed were temporary.
--The signs that will be displayed on earth and in the sky will be temporary (Joel 2:28-31; Rev. 6:12-17).
A sign by its very nature is temporary since it introduces something new to grab the attention of man to the direct intervention and revelation of God.

## 2. The Holy Spirit operates the Gifts (v.11a)

***"Worketh"*** **-** to energize; to empower. The Holy Spirit not only gifts the gifts, He empowers their use (just as God the Father does - v. 6).
Use your gift, but with His power, never in the energy of the flesh (something smells fishy about people who flaunt a gift they don't have and to make matters worse use "it" in such a carnal way).

## 3. The Holy Spirit determines the Gifts (v.11b)

***"Dividing to every man severally"*** **-** The Holy Spirit distributes gifts separately to each individual believer.
***"As He will"*** **-** As He desires or wants to.
He gives not according to the merit or wishes of men, but according to his own will.
Why do people beg God for gifts they don't have? Answer: They are not content with God's will. Crying, begging, "tarrying" for the gift of tongues is futile.
If God wanted you or me to have the gift of tongues (for example), He would have given it unsolicited as He did in the gook of Acts.
It came spontaneously without the recipient seeking it or even knowing about it.
There is nothing more frustrating to a Christian than to attempt to use a gift he doesn't have.
(Many have bailed out of a ministry because they were never gifted for that ministry to begin with.)
The Holy Spirit dispenses gifts as He sees fit; as He wills, not as the believer wills.

It is with a tongue of spiritual sarcasm that Paul speaks of the Corinthians seeking the best gifts in verse 31 -- Because what they should have sought is love (chapter 13).
Leave the gift-giving to the Holy Spirit. Not many things are as pitiful, in my opinion, as a person telling another person what he wants for Christmas or his birthday. You should leave it up to Him!

# III. A Unified/Diversified Church Body
## I Corinthians 12:12-31

Introduction: v.12
**** Each & every member must see his/her vital role in the Body of Christ!***
**I. Every member is united by SPIRIT BAPTISM into the Body (v.13)**
**II. Every member has a DISTINCT FUNCTION in the Body (v.14-17)**
**III. Every member is placed by DIVINE DESIGN into the Body (v.18)**
**IV. Every member should be viewed as NECESSARY to the Body (v.19-25a)**
**V. Every member should be CARED FOR in the Body (v.25b-26)**
**VI. Every member should be SATISFIED with their particular gifts in the Body (v.27-30)**

Introduction: v.12
In God's Church worldwide, it is amazing how distinct or different people are from each other. (different backgrounds, cultures, skin colors, languages, abilities, interests, etc.)
Just as your physical body is all tied (woven) together and yet has distinctively different body parts, so it is with the Body of Christ.

**** Each & every member must see his/her vital role in the Body of Christ!***

## I. Every member is united by SPIRIT BAPTISM into the Body (v.13)

Scripture speaks of three baptisms:
1) Water (Mk. 1:4)
2) Death (Lk. 12:50; Mk. 10:38)
3) Spirit (Acts 1:5)

Proofs that Paul is speaking of Spirit baptism and not water in verse 13:
1. In context, Paul is describing how believers became one with Christ and each other -- this only occurs through Spirit baptism.
2. Paul includes himself (***"we"***), and he was not water-baptized at Corinth.
3. The end of v. 13 clarifies the thought by showing how all believers partake of the Holy Spirit.

4. Spirit baptism was a well-known doctrine, as it had been preached by John the Baptist (Mk. 1:8), promised by Jesus (Acts 1:8), experienced by Peter (Acts 2) and by others (including Gentiles - Acts 10:47), and was taught by Paul (Rom. 6; Eph. 4:5).

***"All baptized"*** **-** Not one child of God goes without Spirit baptism (Rom. 8:9).

***"One body"*** **-** It is this preacher's interpretation that Paul's reference to Christ's "Body" is a reference to the relationship all true believers, all over the world, have with Him. The Universal Church Body finds its physical outworking in local church bodies.

God calls for a concrete external response to this spiritual reality:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Belief | Spirit Baptism | Body of Christ |
| Testimony | Water Baptism | Local Church |

At salvation, a miracle of the Holy Spirit takes place, whereby He regenerates our hearts (Titus 3:5), adopts us into God's family via a second birth (John 3), comes to indwell our bodies (Jn. 14:17; I Cor. 6:19-20), and unites us to Jesus Christ and thus to everyone else who belongs to Christ.

The Spirit immerses (unites) every believer into a vital relationship with Christ, regardless of race or nationality (***"Jews or Gentiles"***), regardless of social status (***"bond or free"***).

Because it is the self-same Spirit who unites us into Christ's Body, there are no second-class, second-rate, lower-cast, or inferior believers.

Note: The work of ***"baptizing"*** and ***"drinking"*** is a work of God. He actively did it; we passively received it.

## II. Every member has a DISTINCT FUNCTION in the Body (v.14-17)

**V. 14**
Your physical body has literally thousands of distinct parts, each performing a different function.

**V. 15-16**
Rhetorical questions expecting a "NO" answer.

**V. 15**
A ***"foot"*** may not be as attractive as a ***"hand"*** but it is vitally needed (as it does a job the hand cannot). [When was the last time you saw someone walk to church standing on his hands??]

**V. 16**

An ***"ear"*** may not be as pretty as an ***"eye"*** but it is vitally needed (as it does a job the eye cannot).

It is infantile (immature) for you to pout about not being the ***"eye."***

"Imagine, if you can, an ear saying, "No one ever looks longingly into me and comments on how beautiful I am, like they do the eyes. I will seek to be an eye." So the poor ear fasts and prays, prostrates itself, pours out its wax, seeking to be an eye. How ridiculous!" (Gardiner, The Corinthian Catastrophe, p. 26-27).

**V. 17**

Each part of the face experiences life through a different sense (eye sees, ear ears, nose smells, tongue tastes, cheeks feel).

Not everyone in the church body can do the same thing. If we all did the same thing, we wouldn't need each other. The body would be limited, single-faceted, and single-dimensional.

We should never be jealous or envious over the giftedness of another believer. Rather, we should praise God for the role he/she plays in the big picture of Christ's body.

Each part must contribute. If you refuse to function because of fear, pride, "inability," etc., the whole body suffers.

## III. Every member is placed by DIVINE DESIGN into the Body (v.18)

Just as God is the Designer and Builder of your physical body (Ps. 139:13-16), so He is the Designer and Builder of the Body of Christ. He sovereignly places each part into Christ's church body and equips and enables each part to do its job.

***"Every one of them"*** **-** Not one member of Christ is without design and purpose. You are no accident, after-thought, or mistake. You have been saved and placed into a ministry by God!

***"As it hath pleased Him"*** **-** We were designed and gifted for God's pleasure, not selfish pursuits. All that we are and have is because of Him (cp. v. 11). We should not seek gifts we were not given, rather we should use the ones we have! And use them so as to please God.

With ability comes responsibility. *"Much given...much is required."*

## IV. Every member should be viewed as NECESSARY to the Body (v.19-25a)

**V. 19**

If every believer did the same thing, the church would not be a body, it would be a blob.

**V. 20**

The church is diversity in unity. Diverse parts functioning as one man.

**V. 21**

Each part of the body is needed and beneficial to the rest.

The eye helps guide the hand, and the hand removes dirt from the eye.

The head sends directions to the feet, and the feet carry the head.
My feet haven't yet learned how to type, nor can I hold a fork and eat with them; however, my hands can't support the weight of my body, nor can I run and kick with them.

**V. 22**

***"Feeble"*** **-** to be weaker, less strong.
My forearm muscles may not be as strong as my biceps, but they are just as vital, perhaps more vital.
Some Christians may tend to have more areas of weakness than you, but they are just as necessary to the body as you are!

**WHO MX??**

> Xvxn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works wxll xxcxpt for onx kxy. Thxrx arx forty-six kxys that function, but just onx not working makxs thx diffxrxncx. Somxtimxs it sxxms that a church is likx my typxwritxr--that not all thx kxys arx working propxrly. You may say, "Wxll, I'm only onx pxrson; I don't makx or brxak a church." But a succxssful church, to bx xffxctivx, rxquirxs thx activx participation of xvxry mxmbxr. So thx nxxt timx you think that your xfforts arx not nxxdxd, rxmxmbxr my old typxwritxr and say to yoursxlf, "I am vxry valuablx to my church and I am nxxdxd vxry much! For thx church to succxxd, I must do my vxry bxst!"

**V. 23**

Often the hidden organs or the body parts which are beneath the surface are the most valuable (EX: heart, liver, kidneys, lungs). We tend to spend a lot of time on our face and hair; yet you can live without hair.
Key Words: ***"Seem to be"*** (v. 22) . . . ***"We think"*** (v. 23).
Man may not think much of a "handicapped" Christian, but God sees the true strength and He knows the true value of each one.

**V. 24**

When some part of Christ's body lacks something, others come to that part's <u>aid</u> and give assistance, thus showering honor on that member.

**V. 25**

Often schisms (divisions) occur in a church body when certain parts which need attention don't get it (EX: Acts 6).
Weaknesses and areas of need actually have a way of drawing people together. God allows needs to arise so that the body can rally together, come to the rescue and unite in helping that area of need.

## V. Every member should be <u>CARED FOR</u> in the Body (v.25b-26)

**V. 25**

When crisis hits or needs arise, such calamities provide an occasion (opportunity) for love to be manifested (Phil. 4:10 - *"But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that not at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.")*.
***"One for another"*** **-** The care should be reciprocal. Something is deeply wrong when someone is always on the <u>receiving</u> end.

**V. 26**

Because of the inter-connectedness of the Body, one parts' misery is shared by all. (EX: stubbing a small toe can produce a tension headache, add stress to other muscles that have to make up for the loss of that one member).

If we really understood how much we are one body with each other, we would *"rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep"* (Rom. 12:15). If a team wins, the whole team wins; if it loses, the entire team loses.

## VI. Every member should be SATISFIED with their particular gifts in the Body (v.27-30)

EX: Michael Jordan -- should have stuck to basketball and not diverted to baseball, which wasn't his gift.

**V. 27**

***"Ye are the body of Christ"*** **-** We are called *"members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones."* (Eph. 5:30)

**V. 28**

***"God hath set..."*** - God determines both one's office and gift.

***"First...secondarily...thirdly"*** **-** The first are ranked in order of honor (Ryrie). Note: Tongues is ranked last.

Note: The reason why miraculous sign gifts are given in the same list is because they all came from the same source - God! This does not prove that all gifts are operative today.

**V. 29-30**

Rhetorical questions expecting a "NO" answer.

Note: Even when the sign gift of tongues was given, not all believers spoke it; but all were Spirit-baptized (v. 13).

Paul's over-all point is this: Don't seek tongues or some other flashy, noticeable, sensational gift. Be satisfied with what God made you and gave you.

Conclusion: v.31

***"Covet earnestly"*** **-** Could be translated by the present tense as a statement of fact "You are coveting earnestly" (Bittlinger, cited by Gardiner, p. 28); or by imperative as KJV - in which case Paul is evidently speaking sarcastically - "You go ahead and covet...but I will now show you what you should be seeking after" (namely, Love - chapter 13).

Are you a team player? Are you a living, functioning part of a body of believers? Will you be missed by the body when God calls you home? Are you contributing in the area of your giftedness?

This is a true statement: "It takes all kinds."

# "THE SUPREMACY OF LOVE"
## I CORINTHIANS 13

Outline:

*** Biblical must be the supreme characteristic of your life.**

Why? 4 Reasons:

**I. BIBLICAL LOVE IS AN ESSENTIAL VIRTUE (v. 1-3)**
- A. Without love your message accomplishes nothing (v. 1)
- B. Without love your gifts (abilities) reveal you to be nothing (v. 2)
- C. Without love your sacrifice profits you nothing (v. 3)

**II. BIBLICAL LOVE IS AN EXALTED VIRTUE (v. 4-7)**
- A. Biblical love is not self-centered (v. 4b-5a)
- B. Biblical love does not seek the harm of others (v. 5b-6a)
- C. Biblical love seeks the well-being of others (v. 4a, 7)

**III. BIBLICAL LOVE IS AN ETERNAL VIRTUE (v. 8-13)**
- A. Love will outlast gifts (v. 8)
- B. Love will outlast present limitations (v.9-12)
- C. Love will outlast some present spiritual virtues (v.13)

INTRODUCTION:

What is the one thing (gift) that you feel you need in your life? If you could choose but one gift, what would it be?

Paul, writing to the church at Corinth, said, "*And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.*" (I Cor. 3:1)

They had the sign gifts of the Spirit, but not the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22).

*"Carnal"* = fleshly - living like *"natural men"* (I Cor. 2:14)

They were characterized by their envying, strife, and divisions in their church.

Paul wrote a letter of rebuke. The Corinthians needed to be corrected because of their:

1. Division (ch. 3)
2. Boastfulness (ch. 4)
3. Fornication (ch. 5)
4. Lawsuits (ch. 6)
5. Immorality (ch. 6)
6. Overindulgence and drunkenness at the Lord's Supper (ch. 11)

The thrust of Paul's message in chapters 12 - 14 is one continuous thought: Combating the Corinthians' desire to uplift themselves.

They needed to learn the principle of unity (ch. 12), love (ch. 13), and building up others (ch. 14).

Their motives for seeking the spectacular, eye catching, miraculous sign gifts was totally self-centered.

Paul ended the last chapter by saying in effect: While you are seeking the best gifts for yourselves, I will show you the most excellent virtue you ought to seek after; I'll show you the supreme feature you need for life & ministry!

*** Biblical must be the supreme characteristic of your life.**

Why? 4 Reasons:

# I. BIBLICAL LOVE IS AN <u>ESSENTIAL</u> VIRTUE (v. 1-3)

Love is a <u>vital</u> ingredient (just as sugar is to cookies, butter to toast, gas to a car)

## A. Without love your <u>message</u> accomplishes nothing (v. 1)

(V. 1 is referring to one's speaking ability)

***"Tongues of men"*** **-** Various literal languages around the world

***"Of angels"*** **-** the language the angels speak in Heaven (no one has ever spoken in angelic language; Paul is speaking hypothetically here.)

***"Tongues"*** **-** a sign to unbelieving Jews that the gospel was now going to the people all over the world. To the Jew this was a sign of judgment--like the parables were. (I Cor.14:20-21)

If I knew Spanish and went to Spain to preach -- Without love, my message is worthless.

If I knew Japanese and went to Japan to preach -- Without love, my message is worthless.

* I may know the language better than any in that country . . .

* I may have articulate excellence and have a very polished message . . .

(EX: Apollos - Acts 18:24; I Cor. 1:12) (SEE: I Cor. 2:1-5 - Paul's message)

* I may know what I am talking about (speaking the truth) --God's Word which is dear to my heart--and yet say it without love.

* Our preaching, teaching, witnessing must have love.

Many times we do it out of duty, or burden for mankind as a whole (Someone said, "I love mankind, it's people I can't stand.")

***"Love"*** **-** Shows to the world our distinctiveness/difference (Jn. 13:34-35 - *"New commandment. . . By this shall all men know.")*

***"sounding brass"*** - like the ringing, echoing, or roaring of a gong.

***"tinkling cymbal"*** - like the high pitch, loud, clashing sound of a cymbal.

Our message is <u>repulsive</u> without love, <u>cold</u>, <u>abrasive</u> (v. 2b)

Win the lost with love, restore a brother with love, put yourself in their shoes and sympathize. . .

## B. Without love your gifts (abilities) reveal you to be nothing (v. 2)

(V. 2 is a reference to knowing ability)

The Corinthians boasted over their gifts. And coveted the attention-getting gifts.
NOTE: Paul's use of the superlative ***"All"***.
Note: Some people perhaps could have understood all mysteries (though doubtful), but to also have all knowledge and all faith and then to have it labeled as nothing is really amazing.
--Though we may know the Bible inside out, without love we are nothing.
--We may know all doctrine, all theology, all hermeneutical principles of interpretation, but without love we are nothing.
--We may have unshakable, confident, circumstance-changing faith, but without love we are nothing.
(And we need all of the above - EX: of Ephesus - Rev. 2:2-4)
People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care!
God is more interested in what we are than what we do.

## C. Without love your sacrifice profits you nothing (v. 3)

(V. 3 is referring to our giving ability)

1) The voluntary sacrifice of possessions is worthless (v. 3a)

***"bestow all my goods to feed"*** - to divide all one property or possessions up into fragments and dole it all out to the poor so that you have nothing left over; not even a crumb.
This verse is showing that it is possible to have the fruit of love and not love itself.
"The works of love are often imitated by those who have no love and yet desire to enjoy the praise of love." (Lenski)
Giving is a fruit of love, but it is not love itself.
Lk. 10:38-42 - Mary & Martha
This does not mean we are not to sacrifice - I Jn. 3:16-18)
If I gave everything so that I might give to those who had nothing, yet did not have love as my motive, I will not be rewarded by God.

Examine your motive!
EX: Motive of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet was sincere

2) The sacrifice of our life is worthless (v. 3b)

Paul is picturing an act of supreme self-sacrifice which is made with a pretense of love for others.

--A martyr for a worthy cause, a voluntary <u>giving</u>, yet without love, it profits me nothing.
--If you died for your beliefs, yet without love, it would profit you nothing.
--If you died for someone else, yet without love, it would profit you nothing.
(And God knows whether or not you have love.)
Let love be your motive!

God will *"judge the secrets of men."*
Without love, our message does nothing – I do nothing
our abilities are nothing - I am nothing
our sacrifice gains nothing - I will be rewarded nothing

# II. BIBLICAL LOVE IS AN <u>EXALTED</u> VIRTUE (v. 4-7)

Note: Paul does not characterize love in its greatest works--sacrifices, martyrdoms, and triumphs--he goes to the ordinary circumstances of life and shows a picture of love.
Instead of attempting a definition of love, Paul gives us a rich description. Placing before our eyes what love does and what love does not do. Take a look at the symptoms of true love.

## A. Biblical love is not <u>self-centered</u> (v. 4b-5a)

***"Envieth not"*** **-** not jealous ("envy" - from "zeal")
EX: Acts 17:1-5 - Unbelieving Jews in Thessalonica *"moved with envy."*

To resent others' prosperity.
*Don't be jealous of others' ability. . .
*Don't be jealous of others' success. . .
*Don't be jealous of others' possessions . . .
*Rather, praise God for it!
Don't try to belittle others, so as to raise up yourself!
"Love looks through a telescope - <u>envy</u> through a microscope."
*Those who have Agape Love do not resent the prosperity of others!*

***"Vaunteth not itself"*** **-** lit. does not parade itself (it is not boastful, does not brag).
Behind boastful bragging, there lies conceit, an over-estimation of one's own importance, abilities or achievements.
Paul goes from envy, to boasting, and from boasting to puffing oneself up -- a natural sequence of lovelessness.
*Those who have Agape Love refrain from rehearsing all of their good traits and promoting self.*

***"Is not puffed up" -*** to be arrogant
Jesus said, "*He that exalteth himself shall be abased; he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."*
Cp. II Cor. 12:20 - *"puffed up" =* swelling
*Those who have Agape Love do not stubbornly insist that their way is best; nor does it look down the nose at others!*

***"Doth not behave itself unseemly" =*** to act unbecoming, rude.
After pride puffs up the heart, tactlessness, disrespect, dishonor and inconsideration in conduct naturally follow.
The concept of *"unseemly behavior"* is translated elsewhere in the New Testament as shame, nakedness, indecency, and is applied to illicit sexual lifestyles (EX: Rom. 1:27 - Homosexuality = *"men with men working that which is unseemly")*
Love never sins.
Love does not shame the testimony of Christ.
*Those who have Agape Love are considerate and courteous, not sarcastic and rude!*

***"Seeketh not her own" -*** *Seek =* to covet earnestly, strive
I Cor. 10:24 - *"Let not man seek his own, but every man another's welfare."*
II Cor. 12:14 - *"I seek not yours but you."*
Phil. 2:21 - *"For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's."*

Love does not seek one's own pleasure, profit, honor, etc.
Does not seek the love of others. "There is more pleasure in loving than in being loved."
True love is always unselfish. How easily said, how hard to attain!
*Those who have Agape Love seek the other person's best interest!*

## B. Biblical love does not seek the harm of others (v. 5b-6a)

(the downfall of others)

Rom. 13:10 - *"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor."*
***"Is not easily provoked" -*** angered, stirred up
Irritated - to the point of a sharp disagreement (EX: Acts 15:39)
Love is not embittered or enraged by abuse, wrong insult, or injury.
"Man is like a piece of steel - he's no good when he loses his temper."
EX: *"When Christ was reviled, He reviled not again."*
EX: Mt. 5:44 - *"Love your enemies..."*
*Those who have Agape Love control their anger even when pushed to the limit!*

***"Thinketh no evil" -*** Keeps no account book (record) of the wrongs of others. It forgives and forgets (70 x 70).
*Love does not count something against someone.
*Love does not keep a record of wrongs.

Same word used of God: *"He does not impute to us our guilt"*
Rom. 4:8 - *"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."*
II Cor. 5:19 - *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them..."*
*Those who have Agape Love forgive the wrongs committed against them and do not keep score, nor store up memories of past wrongs and then drag them out to win a point at some future time.* (Richard Strauss)

***"Rejoiceth not in iniquity"*** - No pleasure in sin whatsoever.
--Does not rejoice over sin in out own life (EX: past sin, before salvation)
--Verse is more specifically referring to sin in the lives of others. Does not find joy in some juicy tid bit about someone else.
We should be grieved, our hearts should be broken!

Because:
Sin hurts the one who committed it.
Sin calls for the chastisement of God upon the wrong doer.
Sin grieves God's heart - He is displeased.

*Those with Agape Love do not take sweet pleasure in the troubles, misfortunes, or failures of even their enemies who fall into sin's snare.*

**On the contrary, ***"Love rejoices in the truth."***

Love seeks to correct a brother.
Love gladly finds pleasure when unrighteousness has been delivered out of a person, and he is living right with God.
*Those who have Apape Love praise God when their enemy comes to find the truth of God's grace & love.*

## C. Biblical love seeks the well-being of others (v. 4a, 7)

(is patiently supportive)
***"Suffereth long"*** - patient
ILLUS: Christ's patience with proud, selfish, quibbling disciples (*"He loved them to the end"*)
Word used of God - *"...longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish..."*
When among those who are hating us and seeking to do us wrong, we don't allow resentment and retaliation Although they deserve it.
"Those who deserve love the least, need it the most!"
*Those who have Agape Love have an extra level of tolerance toward those who are stupid, careless and inconsiderate.*

***"And is kind" -*** useful, helpful, friendly
A mark of Christ's ministry on earth (EX: woman at the well; adulterous woman).

Kindness - despite the surroundings (especially when life is distressing and hard).
ILLUS: of a rich man about to commit suicide when a little, thin, hungry boy pulled on his coat and asked for help (Knight, p. 215).

*Those who have Apape Love are sensitive to the needs of others; Always seeking a way to serve.*

***"Beareth all things" -*** supportive, protective
Derived from a word that means "to protect, to cover, to put a roof over, to throw a cloak of silence over what is displeasing in another person."
You go to that person -- not broadcast it to the world. Love never gossips.
I Peter 4:8 - *"And above all these things, have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall* (imperative) *cover* [not the same word as "beareth" but similar idea] *the multitude of sins."*
*Those who have Agape Love put a lid on gossip and do not broadcast confidentialities.*

***"Believeth all things" -*** trusts; (this does not mean that love is gullible, but that it won't become a skeptic even after getting burned in the past)
Refuse to believe suspicions of doubt.
The flesh is ready to believe all things about a brother and a fellow man in an evil sense. Love does the opposite.
Love places confidence in, it relies upon.
While love *"beareth all things"* in that it refuses to immediately believe all that is worst in a person, it secondly *"believeth all things"* - all that is best in a person.
*Those who have Agape Love do not torment others with groundless suspicions but treat them with trust (ultimately trusting God).*

***"Hopeth all things" -*** to trust with confidence.
We expect what is best in another person.
Hope knows no pessimism.
Paul said, *"I am confident that He which hath begun a good work in you..."*
The basis of this confidence is not in the person's natural abilities, but in the grace of Christ.
*Those who have Agape Love do not lose all confidence in a person and sink into discouragement, despondency and despair.*

***"Endureth all things" -*** Brave perseverance.
To remain under; to maintain control under pain, pressure, and injury.
**Opposite of fleeing away and quitting!
When we love our children, we don't quit! Our mate, etc.
*Those who have Agape Love do not allow problematic people to rob them of their joy nor will power to go on.*

# III. BIBLICAL LOVE IS AN ETERNAL VIRTUE (v. 8-13)

The permanence of love. ...Where are your investments? What do you take stock in?
***"Love never fails"*** **-** lit. never falls down, never becomes invalid, never comes to an end.
There are many things in life that end! They are temporary.
Paul now deals with the permanence of love; Love will never be a bad investment; it will never go "out of style" with God; it will always bring spiritual revenue (eternal dividends).

## A. Love will outlast gifts (v. 8)

a. Love will supersede prophesies
***"Prophecy"*** **-** to foretell and forth-tell (the ability to speak)
***"Shall fail"*** **-** to be done away with (passive)

b. Love will supersede tongues
***"Tongues"*** **-** a sign gift of speaking known languages
***"Shall cease"*** **-** shall stop on its own (when God's purpose was fulfilled - I Cor. 14:22)

c. Love will supersede knowledge
***"Knowledge"*** **-** a deep, enlarged understanding of spiritual truths (which is still limited compared to what we will know in Heaven).
***"Shall vanish away"*** **-** to be done away with (passive)

## B. Love will outlast present limitations (v.9-12)

Note: Tongues is not mentioned.

a. Presently we have limited knowledge
We know only a part--a portion--of all there is to know about God.

b. Presently we have limited ability to express spiritual truths
We are restricted:
--Because God only revealed to us what He wanted us to know.
--Because our sinful, depraved minds cannot contain all there is to know; therefore, we can't proclaim it all.

*When will those limitations end? ***"When that which is perfect has come."***
***"That which is perfect" =*** To reach the goal, to bring to the end, to reach the place of total completeness and maturity --
Context demonstrates: When we are transformed when we see Christ face to face in Heaven.
SEE: Rev. 21:1-6a
No more need for preaching/prophesying (Jer. 31:34)
No more need for our partial knowledge.
ILLUS: Paul's replacement of his immature abilities (compares manhood

with infancy -- a drastic difference) --

***"Spake"*** **-** alludes to prophecy

***"Understood"*** **-** alludes to knowledge

***"Thought"*** **-** alludes to knowledge

Nothing is wrong with childish things when you are a child. What is wrong with toys, rattles, & play pens? Nothing, when you are a child.

***"Glass"*** **-** mirror (back then, polished brass or metal) - a dim reflection

Paul contrasts between the incomplete knowledge gained by seeing a reflection of an object and by seeing the object itself.

We will go from present limited sight to future personal sight (I Jn . 3:2).

We will go from present limited knowledge to future perfect knowledge.

## C. Love will outlast some present spiritual virtues (v.13)

In our spiritual investment strategy we need to invest in 3 spiritual stocks, but especially in the matter of love.

1) In Heaven, **faith** will be replaced by sight
2) In Heaven, **hope** will be replaced by reality
3) But **love** (as demonstrated at Calvary) will continue forever.

# Do Your Words Edify?
## I Corinthians 14:1-19

Outline:

* ***When you speak..."seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church!" (v.12)***

*5 Reasons why you should use your tongue to proclaim truth in an intelligible manner:*

**I. Our message should be CLEAR not cryptic (v.2-3)**

*Tongues: Mysterious Message* *Prophecy: Clear Message*

**II. Our message should be OTHERS-CENTERED not self-centered (v.4)**

*Tongues: Ego-Centric* *Prophecy: Others-Centered*

**III. Our message should EDIFY not mystify (v.5)**

*Tongues: Inferior Gift* *Prophecy: Superior Gift*

**IV. Our message should PROFIT not be detrimental (v.6)**

Tongues: No Profit (w/o Interpretation) Prophecy: Beneficial

**V. Our message should be RATIONAL not illogical (v.7-17)**

Tongues: Unintelligible Prophecy: Understandable

***5 Illustrations of the need for understandable communication:***

A. **Musical Instruments** must communicate an understandable message (v.7-8)
B. **Language** in General must communicate an understandable message (v.9-11)
C. **Prayer** must communicate an understandable message (v.13-15a)
D. **Songs** must communicate an understandable message (v.15b)
E. **Praise** (Testimonies) must communicate an understandable message (v.16-17)

Introduction: (v.1,12)

The Tongue:

There is tremendous power in one of our smallest body parts: the tongue.

With it, we can direct others with words of wisdom, truth, and kindness; or destroy others with error, lies, and maliciousness (Ja. 3).

Solomon said: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" Prov. 18:21

The power of speech is one of the greatest powers God has given us. With the tongue, man can praise God, pray, preach, lead a soul to Christ, comfort, encourage . . . What a privilege!

But that same tongue can tell lies, ruin a man's reputation, split a church, or break a person's heart.

*"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers"* (Eph. 4:29).

**V. 1**

***"Follow after"*** **-** A term denoting concentrated earnestness; lit. to <u>hunt</u> after, to <u>pursue</u> habitually without diversion.

God never says to pursue tongues, but He spent an entire chapter giving us reasons why we should pursue *agape* love (ch. 13).

***"Desire"*** **-** We should be zealous about the gifts God has to offer us. Anything the Holy Spirit has to offer; I want what He wants for me! (Nothing more, nothing less)

When it comes to <u>prioritizing</u> which spiritual gifts we should desire, Paul is now going to say that we should desire those gifts that will benefit others.

The ultimate way we benefit others in a church is by the <u>words</u> we say.

Hence, Paul's emphasis on the word *"<u>prophesy</u>."*

***"Prophesy"*** **-** to foretell or forthtell God's Word (in this chapter, the word is used of forthtelling or declaring the truth of God).

**V. 12**

Note the theme (major point of emphasis) in this chapter in verse 12. Paul says: Since you have a zealot's passion for spiritual gifts, channel that zeal toward seeking to ***"excel*** (abound) ***"to the edifying*** (building up) ***of the church."*** [Seek to possess and implement gifts that will edify the people of your local church!]

***"Church"*** **-** local church, as in v. 19 *"in the church."*

In chapter 14 Paul shows the pre-eminence of prophecy over tongues.

[Notice BACKGROUND to the origin of tongues - Mark 16; Acts 2.]

## * *When you speak..."seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church!" (v.12)*

*5 Reasons why you should use your tongue to proclaim truth in an intelligible manner:*

## I. Our message should be <u>CLEAR</u> not cryptic (v.2-3)

*<u>Tongues</u>: Mysterious Message* *<u>Prophecy</u>: Clear Message*

**V. 2**

***"Unknown"*** **-** Unknown to the speaker, but known somewhere in the world (Acts 2); yet unless perchance it happens at a United Nations gathering (or the day of *"Pentecost"* - Acts 2), no one will understand you, except God who knows all languages.

***"In the Spirit"*** **-** two possibilities:

1. Holy Spirit - instrumental use
2. Human Spirit - locative use

***"Mysteries"*** **-** Something that is kept secret, not revealed, cryptic

**V. 3**

1) ***"Edification"*** **-** to build up
(to impart strength)
2) ***"Exhortation"*** **-** to encourage
(to impart challenge)
3) ***"Comfort"*** **-** to console
(to impart peace)

No one is strengthened, challenged, or comforted by someone speaking in a language they don't understand.
God expects us to seek to communicate a message that is not cloudy, but clear; not confusing, but convicting; not chaotic, but calming.

## II. Our message should be OTHERS-CENTERED not self-centered (v.4)

*Tongues: Ego-Centric* *Prophecy: Others-Centered*

***"Edifieth himself"*** **-** Paul is NOT saying that this is the purpose of tongues, but the problem of tongues. If no one understands what is being said, then the only one being edified is the speaker. And since he may not have the gift of interpretation, he may not even know what he is saying, and the only thing being edified is his own ego (pride).

***"But"*** **-** (in contrast) one who speaks God's truth in a language others know imparts blessing.

## III. Our message should EDIFY not mystify (v.5)

*Tongues: Inferior Gift* *Prophecy: Superior Gift*

Since tongues was a gift given by the Spirit of God for a definite purpose, Paul (in his human reasoning) thought it would be neat if all of the Corinthians had the gift.
However, not all did speak in tongues (12:30), and such was never the Spirit's intention (12:11).
Why is a preacher (prophet) greater than a tongues talker? One is serving others and the other is serving himself. (Greatness is in serving others and not in being served - Mt. 20:25-26).
The truly great Christians use their gifts to edify others.
True greatness as a servant of Christ is to minister to His people in the local church.
Without interpretation tongues had zero value (no purpose) in church.

## IV. Our message should PROFIT not be detrimental (v.6)

Tongues: No Profit (w/o Interpretation) Prophecy: Beneficial

***"Profit"*** **-** benefit, gain
What good would Paul's teaching be to the Corinthians if he didn't speak their language?
***"Revelation"*** **-** to unveil truth (visually)
***"Knowledge"*** **-** to comprehend truth (mentally)
***"Prophesying"*** **-** to declare truth (boldly as a prophet)
***"Doctrine"*** **-** to teach truth (patiently as a teacher)

## V. Our message should be RATIONAL not illogical (v.7-17)

Tongues: Unintelligible Prophecy: Understandable

Note the repeated references to the mind or reason.

Observe the words:
***"Known"*** (v. 7, 9)
***"Understood"*** (v. 9)
***"Know"*** (v. 11)
***"Understanding"*** (v. 14, 15a, 15b, 19)
***"Understandeth"*** (v. 16)

***5 Illustrations of the need for understandable communication:***

A. **Musical Instruments** must communicate an understandable message (v.7-8)

**V. 7**
***"A distinction in the sounds"*** **-** a logical difference in the notes
Music communicates a message (even without the words!). But not if you only hit one note or if you randomly hit any note without order, purpose or intention.

**V. 8**
***"An uncertain sound"*** **-** If no one knows the piece of music, nor associates it with an expected response, it will not lead to the desired action. The troops don't prepare for battle to a foreign blues tune of Louis Armstrong.

B. **Language** in General must communicate an understandable message (v.9-11)

**V. 9**
***"Easy to be understood"*** **-** With right words, right word order, right syntax, right grammar.
If I said, "Died their sin sinners to Jesus from save" - I make no sense.
However, when I say the same words in the correct grammatical order, it comes out this way: "Jesus died to save sinners from their sin."

Every "tongue talker" in church today is doing nothing but ***"speaking into the air."***

**V. 10**
Many languages exist in our world, but not one is without meaning. The purpose of language is to communicate meaning.
**V. 11**
***"Barbarians"*** were European foreigners whose language sounded like "Bar-bar" to the Greek or Hebrew speaking people of Paul's day.

C. **Prayer** must communicate an understandable message (v.13-15a)
**V. 13**
Since edification is the goal, communication is the means to that goal. Hence, interpretation was a worthy gift for some to pray for.
Incidentally, no one prayed in tongues to receive the gift of interpretation of tongues; rather, one prayed for God's will with meaning.

**V. 14**
Many use this verse in an attempt to show tongues to be a private "Prayer Language." However, Paul is speaking "hypothetically," as evidenced by the word ***"if."***
Some try to tie in Rom. 8:26 (*"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."*) to prove that tongues is a prayer language.
However, Rom. 8:26 is teaching that the Holy Spirit prays for us in intercession, not through us in tongues; it also teaches that His groanings cannot be uttered by any human tongue or language!

**V. 15**
***"What is it then?"-*** What good is such prayer? No good!
To pray without understanding is to violate everything the Bible teaches about prayer. (Prayer must never be without meaning or understanding.) (EX: The Lord's prayer, not speaking God's name in vain, not praying in vain repetitions).

D. **Songs** must communicate an understandable message (v.15b)

Whenever we sing, we must mean what we are singing, or else we may in fact be uttering God's name in vain!
Both spirit and mind must be engaged whenever we pray or sing.
To engage the human spirit without the mind is New Age spooky metaphysics. To engage the mind without The spirit is cold, plastic, carnal, human rationalism.
We need both mind and spirit to be in sync together.

E. **Praise** (Testimonies) must communicate an understandable message (v.16-17)

**V. 16**
***"Bless" -*** to say a good word about God
***"Unlearned" -*** One who does not understand the message
The Early Church had testimony meetings. Giving testimonies (publicly thanking God for what He has done either for you or through you) was a part of the church service (keep testimonies clear, concise, and Christ-centered).
**V. 17**
One goal of a testimony meeting was to edify others by allowing them to hear how God has worked in your life.

Conclusion: (v.18-19)

**V. 18**
Tongues was a sign gift, and Paul had signs authenticating his apostolic office in abundance (II Cor. 12:12 - *"Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds")*.

**V. 19**

In church, five words spoken with comprehension are better than 10,000 unintelligible foreign words.

--Tongues were never intended for private use.

--Tongues were never intended for church use (without an interpreter).

How interested (concerned) are you in your words to others in this church?

May we use our tongues unselfishly to build up others rather than to blow our own horns and promote self.

When others leave your presence, are they strengthened, encouraged, stimulated or provoked unto good works, or are they weakened, depressed, or confused?

# "The Biblical Purpose for TONGUES"
## I Corinthians 14:20-22

INTRODUCTORY ADMONITION:

*We are to base our beliefs on Scripture, not experience or emotional feelings.
Experience cannot dictate doctrine. In other words, we are to test any experience by doctrine, not test doctrine by experience. We must "try the spirits" (I Jn. 4:1; Is. 8:20).

**The Bible**

For feelings come and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving.
My warrant is the Word of God;
Naught else is worth believing.
Tho' all my heart should feel oppressed
For want of some sweet token,
There is One greater than my heart,
Whose Word cannot be broken.
I'll trust in God's unchanging Word,
Till soul and body sever;
For tho' all things shall pall away,
His Word shall stand forever!

# What is the Nature of Tongues?

**A. Tongues were literal languages (Acts 2:2-11) (never gibberish or a "heavenly language")**

Proof:

1. The definition of tongues:
   a. **"Glossa"** (from which we derive our English word "glossary")
      1) Refers to the literal physical tongue (Rom. 3:13)
      2) Refers to a tribe, kindred, people, or nation (Rev. 7:9)
      3) Primarily refers to a literal language (Acts 2:4, 11)

   b. **"Dialektos"** (from which we derive our English word "dialect")
      Only refers to literal languages (Acts 21:40 - "He spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue...")
      NOTE: The words "glossa" and "dialektos" are used synonymously in Acts 2. Acts 2:8, 11 - "We [hear] every man in his own tongue (dialektos). . . we . . . hear them speak in our tongues (glossa)."

2. The demonstration of tongues:
(Acts 2:8-12)
--**15** literal languages listed
NOTE: The gift of tongues always involved a literal known ethnic language, though it was unknown to the speaker (he was not speaking a language he knew, but was speaking a language known somewhere in the world).
The word "unknown" in I Cor. 14:2, 4, 13, 19, etc., is italicized, meaning it is not in the Greek.

## B. Tongues were revelatory in nature (Acts 2:11)

The Spirit of God was speaking directly to and through those who spoke in tongues. God is not pouring out new revelation today. The only way He directly speaks today is through the Bible!

## C. The gift of tongues was a miraculous sign gift

1. **"Miracle"** = a supernatural event that occurs in the physical world by the direct power of God for the purpose of proving that God is directly speaking and specifically acting (either independently or through a chosen person).
Greek words: "dynamis - a display of might or power; "teras" - a miracle that causes wonder and amazement.

2. **"Sign"** = ("semeion") a miraculous mark or token that proves a claim (authenticates) or provides a warning.
The Jews sought for signs - I Cor. 1:22

3. **"Gift"** = ("charisma") an endowment of grace given by the Holy Spirit to believers to accomplish God's will (Rom. 12:6; I Cor. 12:28).

   While every believer has a gift or gifts from God,
   **the basic purpose of sign gifts is to confirm (authenticate) a message or messenger.

   Examples:
   --A message confirmed - Heb. 2:3-4
   --Messengers (apostles) confirmed - II Cor. 12:12

# What is the PROBLEM with Tongues?

Much confusion and unsound doctrine has arisen because of a misunderstanding of Scriptures dealing with the matter of tongues.

In the N.T. the sign gift of tongues is specifically mentioned in only five passages of Scripture:

## A. Prophetical Passage - foretold by Jesus, Mark 16:17

## B. Historical Passages -

1. The Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13)
2. The House of Cornelius (Acts 10:44-47; 11:15-18)
3. The disciples of John the Baptist (Acts 19:1-7)

[NOTE: An implied reference is in Acts 8:16-18.]

## C. Doctrinal Passage - the church in Corinth, I Cor. 12:1-14:40

There is a great need to understand I Cor. 12-14 in its context!
NOTE: The problems in the Corinthian church throughout the book.
The Corinthians are described as "divisive" (1:10) and "carnal" (3:1).

Therefore, the bulk of the teaching Paul gives in this book is corrective in nature. Paul does not condone their practices but actually condemns and corrects their practices (one such practice was their speaking in tongues).

Chapter 12
The need for unity and harmony in the church. The problem at Corinth was that everyone in the church was seeking to be in the limelight (or to be prominent, to have the eye-catching, notable gifts which could be seen by others, such as tongues).

In chapter 12 Paul, therefore, unfolds the importance of every gift and every body part.

Chapter 13
While everyone was busy coveting the "best gifts," Paul in I Cor. 13 shows the prominence and necessity of Love over gifts (specifically over tongues - v. 1, 8).

Chapter 14
In this chapter Paul condemns the improper use of tongues, and shows the priority of "prophesying" (teaching people in a language they know and understand).

Two key ideas in 14:1-19 -

Prophecy edifies, tongues does not (v. 1-12)

Prophecy is understandable, tongues is not (v. 13-19)

[NOTE: In order for tongues to edify or be understood, interpretation was needed - v. 5, 26-28]

# *What is the PURPOSE of Tongues?*

SEE: I Cor. 14:20-22

**v.20** ***"...In understanding be men"*** **-** be mature; grow up when it comes to understanding God's purpose for tongues.

When we understand the purpose of tongues, we then can answer the following questions:

1. What is this unusual sign gift all about?
2. Is tongues for today?
3. If tongues ceased, when did it cease?

## Paul gives the purpose of tongues in I Cor. 14:22:

**Verse 21**

Question: Who is meant by ***"this people"*** in verse 21?
Answer: Israel (cp. Ezekiel 3:4-7)

The scripture Paul cites in verse 21 is Isaiah 28:11-12

Because Israel wouldn't listen to Isaiah, he had to lecture them like little children - "precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, and there a little" (v. 10).

When they mocked this way of teaching, soon God would give them His message in a language they would not understand (Assyrians, then Babylonians) (READ V. 11, 12)

In verse 22, Paul gives his conclusion based on what he just said in verse 21.

## Tongues are a sign of judgment to unbelieving Israel.

**God used language as an evidence of judgment throughout the Bible:**

**1)** **At the Tower of Babel**
"The whole earth was of one language, and one speech" (Gen. 11:1).
The people did not obey the command given to Noah to "replenish the earth" (Gen. 9:1) but became proud (Gen. 11:4) and united without God, so God confused their languages and established the parent languages of the earth (today over 3,000 languages and dialects).

**2)** **Deut. 28 Blessings & Cursings** - curses were to be a "sign" (v. 46) Deut. 28:49 - "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;"

**3)** **Jeremiah** the "weeping prophet" preached, and Israel would not repent from her backsliding, so God said He would send judgment. Jer. 5:14-15 - "Wherefore, thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the Lord: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say."

**4)** **In the NT** (after Mt. 12 - unpardonable sin), Christ spoke in **parables** because of the hardness of the people's hearts. They would not listen to plain talk, so He veiled His speech by parables. (READ Mt. 13:10-15).

I Cor. 14:22 - Tongues were not for:

1) Self-edification but a sign of judgment
2) Entertainment or amusement but a sign of judgment
3) Spreading the Gospel to other nationalities but a sign of judgment
4) The benefit of the assembly of believers (church) but a sign of judgment
5) private use but for public as a sign of judgment
6) a sign that you finally had the Holy Spirit (Paul said not all spoke in tongues; but all had the Holy Spirit)

Because tongues is a sign of judgment for Israel - it is a sign of **blessing** for Gentiles.

God's judgment of Israel:

1) Rom. 11:13-24 - natural branch (Israel) broken off; wild olive tree (Gentiles) grafted in.
2) Mt. 21:28-22:14 - 3 parables describing God's judgment on Israel (Mt. 21:43 - "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

The sign of tongues was to show that God was going to accept Gentiles (people of a different tongue). This was a hard lesson for Peter and the apostles to learn.

Peter and the other Apostles would need objective proof that God had accepted the Gentiles on an equal basis with the Jews and that they were given the same Holy Spirit that they received on Pentecost.

--So when the Samaritans were saved, they spoke in tongues (Acts 8:17, 18)
--When the Gentiles were saved, they spoke in tongues (10:46)
--When the proselytes of John were saved, they spoke in tongues (19:6)

No longer would God confine Himself to one people as a channel; no longer would God operate His work of grace through one nation and speak one language.

Tongues ceased when their purpose was done. (it was a temporary sign gift).

Tongues ceased because its specific purpose was fulfilled. In 70 A.D. Titus sacked Jerusalem, killing 1,100,000 Jews and scattering the rest all over the world.

# What is Wrong With Speaking in Tongues?

Answer: Nothing was wrong with the gift of "tongues" -- as it was originally given and during the time when it was given by God.

What is wrong is the "tongues" that is practiced and witnessed today.

See article by Roy E. Knuteson, The Discerner, Vol. IV, #4, Oct.-Dec., 1962, Religion Analysis Service, Inc., Minneapolis, MN.

## A. Today's "tongues" is wrong, because it is encouraged for everyone.

1. All spiritual gifts are given at the discretion and wisdom of the Holy Spirit - "as He will"
(I Cor. 12:11).

2. Not all Christians spoke in tongues (I Cor. 12:30), but all had the Spirit (Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 12:13).

3. Speaking in tongues is never commanded by God.

4. For everyone to speak in tongues in a Church gathering would produce a confusing message to outsiders who visit the assembly (see: I Cor.14:23-25)

**B. Today's "tongues" is wrong, because it is interpreted as <u>proof of spiritual maturity</u>.**

1. Proof of spiritual maturity does <u>not</u> come from the <u>gifts</u> of the Spirit, but from the "fruits of the Spirit."

   The Corinthian church had all the "gifts" (I Cor. 1:7), but did not have the "fruits" - they were carnal babies (I Cor. 3:1-3).

2. For many contemporary Pentecostals and Charismatics, tongues is a "badge of spirituality." Unfortunately, tongues is often all they base their spirituality on.

**C. Today's "tongues" is wrong, because it is claimed to be the <u>sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit</u>.**

1. If tongues were to be the proof of the baptism of the Spirit, why did only some believers have such proof and not all? All believers received the baptism (I Cor. 12:13), but not all spoke in tongues (I Cor. 12:30).

**D. Today's "tongues" is wrong, because it is <u>not</u> practiced according to the <u>rules laid down in Scripture</u>.**

1. First: Tongues speaking must acknowledge the <u>Lordship of Christ</u> (I Cor. 12:3).

2. Second: There must be an <u>interpreter</u> (I Cor. 14:5, 27, 28).

   <u>Edification</u> was necessary if the gift was to be exercised in the church (I Cor. 14:3, 4, 5, 6, 17, 19).

3. Third: The "tongues" speaker must realize that "tongues" is not a priority gift (I Cor. 14:19); therefore, boasting of such a gift is unwarranted.

4. Fourth: Tongues should be exercised in the presence of unbelieving Jews (I Cor. 14:21-22).
   Jews require a "sign" (I Cor. 1:22).
   The sign gift of tongues was to "this people" (I Cor. 14:21 - Israel).

5. Fifth: No more than three persons may exercise this gift at any one meeting (I Cor. 14:27).

6. Sixth: Women are not to speak with tongues in church (I Cor. 14:34, 35).

7. Seventh: The gift must be governed by love (I Cor. 13:1), and by orderliness (I Cor. 14:40).

## E. Today's "tongues" is wrong, because God said "Tongues would cease" (I Cor. 13:8).

1. The middle voice of the verb "cease" indicates that tongues ended on its own.

2. When did it end? Answer: When its purpose was finished - that is, when the sign of judgment to unbelieving Israel was no longer needed (I Cor. 14:21-22).

CONCLUSION:

Three explanations for modern day tongues. In some cases it may be…

1. **Intentional counterfeit** (many fake it to receive recognition by their peers)

2. **Psychological counterfeit** (many want "it" so badly, they induce themselves to utter "tongues")

3. **Satanic counterfeit** (speaking in tongues is not a practice limited to the Charismatics or Pentecostals, but has been widely practiced by spiritists, demon worshippers, and occult groups of many diverse cultures and religions).

# ORDER IN THE CHURCH!
## I Corinthians 14:23-40

Outline:
*** We must always maintain God's order in the Church assembly!**
How does God expect a church service to function?

**I. God expects a church to deliver...**
**An UNDERSTANDABLE MESSAGE (v.23-25)**
*(Not Madness & Chaos)*

**II. God expects a church to tailor all activity to...**
**An EDIFYING MINISTRY (v.26)**
*(Not show-offs or self-entertainment)*

**III. God expects a church to follow...**
**An ORDERLY METHODOLOGY (v.27-33)**
*(Not commotion & confusion)*

**IV. God expects a church to submit to...**
**MALE LEADERSHIP (v.34-35)**
*(Not women pastors)*

Introduction: v.33, 40

Since the church is God's institution, He has the right to set the guidelines for how it is to function.

The Lord has allowed much Christian liberty when it comes to a church's "order of service" or "format of worship."
(He did not institute a regimented, ritualistic, "high church," liturgical order of service as some denominations practice--going through the same motions week after week. God didn't do it that way because Christian worship was never intended to be a boxed-in, outward conformity lacking in spontaneity or not allowing for cultural or stylistic variations.)

*** We must always maintain God's order in the Church assembly!**

How does God expect a church service to function?

**I. God expects a church to deliver...**
**An UNDERSTANDABLE MESSAGE (v.23-25)**
*(Not Madness & Chaos)*

**V. 23**

Some activities go on in churches that you wouldn't even find at a circus, carnival, or psycho ward!

Our testimony before immature believers or the unsaved is vitally important!

No doubt many have rejected Christianity on the basis that the Christians they met were inconsistent with the message they preached. If we preach that Christ changes people and gives light where there was darkness, peace where there was turmoil, order where there was confusion, grace where there was heathenism -- they expect to see a Godly distinctive.

***"Mad" =*** to be crazy; a raving maniac; a lunatic; out of one's mind.

**V. 23-24**

In many Pentecostal/Charismatic churches, the scene is one of chaos, confusion, and disorder (men and women speaking in false "tongues," being "slain in the Spirit," alleged direct revelations, "holy laughter," "holy barking," etc.).

**V. 24**

***"Prophesy"*** **-** To proclaim God's truth in a clear, understandable, intelligible manner.

To give an understandable message, we must always:

1) Engage the brain before you engage the tongue
2) Plan your message; don't "shoot from the hip" (be diligent in preparation - II Tim. 2:15)
3) Speak up; speak out; speak clearly

***"Convinced"*** **-** convicted by his sin

***"Judged"*** **-** called into account for his sin

Before anyone gets saved, they must be convicted of sin and be aware of the holy judgment of God against sin - John 16:8.

**V. 25**

The clear proclamation of God's Word has the power to bring one's hidden sin and concealed wicked motives out in the open for him to clearly see.

*"Let your light so shine before men. . ."* (Mt. 5:16).

Do people recognize that ***"God is in you"***?

Do they see Him at work in and through your life and ministry?

Someone has said that if the Holy Spirit was removed totally from the average church, 99% of the activity would continue uninterrupted.

**V. 23-25**

Incidentally, the scenario Paul paints in vv. 23-25 teaches that the church assembly is supposed to be a place where believers congregate. The presence of many unbelievers is not the norm. The church generally scatters to evangelize and gathers to edify.

## II. God expects a church to tailor all activity to...

## An EDIFYING MINISTRY (v.26)

*(Not show-offs or self-entertainment)*

***"Psalm"*** **-** a hymn or Scripture put to song
***"Doctrine"*** **-** a teaching
***"Tongue"*** **-** a particular language or dialect unknown to the speaker (a sign gift which ceased)
***"Revelation"*** **-** a new truth unveiled by God via His Spirit during a time when the Church did not have God's completed written revelation.
***"Interpretation"*** **-** to translate the meaning of a message

Verse 26 teaches:
--Layman participation in the service
--Diversified types of service
--All with a unified purpose of edifying the hearers

The Body unites each week to build itself up spiritually.

Every one of us needs the verbal encouragement received at a Biblical church service.

Don't *"Forsake the assembly"* (Heb. 10:25) or you may miss out on just what you needed to hear to strengthen you in the faith.

***"All things"*** **-** All church ministry should have as its goal: edification. If it will not edify, it should not be part of a church service.

Warren Wiersbe writes: "I recall being in a testimony meeting where a woman took forty minutes telling a boring experience and, as a result, destroyed the spirit of the meeting. Evangelist D. L. Moody was leading a service and asked a man to pray. Taking advantage of his opportunity, the man prayed on and on. Sensing that the prayer was killing the meeting instead of blessing it, Moody spoke up and said, "While our brother finishes his prayer, let us sing a hymn!" (Wiersbe, p. 615)

## III. God expects a church to follow...

## An ORDERLY METHODOLOGY (v.27-33)

*(Not commotion & confusion)*

**V. 27**

In a day when tongues was operative, God set these rules:
--No more than three could speak in tongues in a service
--Each must take turns (go in order; one at a time)
--There must be a translator

**V. 28**

***"Let him speak to himself, and to God" -*** Keep it to yourself and God.
Paul is not giving the purpose of tongues here, nor is he teaching that tongues was for self-edification, or a private prayer language. He was saying if there is no interpreter, keep your tongues to yourself!

**V. 29**

Two or three messages could be given by those who held the office of prophet at a church service (we give two each Sunday).
When they spoke, the people were not to simply soak it in without judging what was said (the listeners were to examine it, scrutinize it, or compare it with known Scripture).
God commands us: I Thes. 5:20-22 - *"Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil."*
The church at Corinth, being a new church, evidently did not yet have ordained elders, so prophets and others who prophesied shared the service.

**V. 30**

Only one speaker at a time. [Never talk when someone else is talking. It is rude (disrespectful) and disruptive (confusing).]

**V. 31**

***"All prophesy" -*** A type of testimony service
***"Learn" -*** intellectual benefit
***"Comforted" -*** emotional benefit

**V. 32**

No speaker for God can ever say that he couldn't help saying what he said ("The Spirit just took over"). No! This may be true in demonism and spiritism where the speaker becomes absolutely passive, but it is not true of Bible Christianity. Every man of God must remain in full control of his mental and emotional faculties.

**V. 33**

Anything God does, He does with order and purpose. (the result being peace, not turmoil)
And He does not work one way in one church and another way in another! He is the Author of peace ***"in all the churches."***

## IV. God expects a church to submit to...

## MALE LEADERSHIP (v.34-35)

*(Not women pastors)*

**V. 34**

The RESTRICTION of I Corinthians 14:34-38 prohibits female leadership in the church.

**V. 34**

***"Keep silent. . . not permitted to speak" -***

--In the context this prohibition would definitely apply to speaking in tongues.

--It does not mean that women cannot pray in church or give testimonies (because I Cor. 11:5 speaks of women *"praying"* [not necessarily leading in prayer] and *"prophesying"* or uttering in plain language a truth God has revealed to her).

The *"speaking"* in this verse refers to an authoritative leadership role over men as evident by the qualifying phrase ***"but they are commanded to be under obedience*** (submission) (i.e. to male leadership)."

It is vitally important to note that God's restriction (given via the Apostle Paul) is not one that only applied to his time, generation or culture. He states: *"As also saith the Law"* (v. 34). This reference to the Old Testament shows this New Testament teaching to be an eternal principle [not one limited to Paul's day].

**V. 35**

The Apostle Paul further applies the *"speaking"* of women to questioning the male leadership in public worship. Such disruptive, divisive questions by women who were flaunting and abusing their Christian liberty would undermine the leadership and cause a divisive, disunited spirit in the church body.

God calls it a ***"shame for women to speak in church"*** (v. 35) (that is: it is a shame for a woman to verbally usurp or interrogate the male leadership of the Church). The women were to hold such questions to ask their husbands at home (v. 35).

Conclusion: v.36-40

**V. 36**
To the Corinthians, who thought they knew it all and were the only source of truth, Paul asks two questions:

1) Did God's Word (the Bible) originate with you?
(implied: No it did not!)
2) Are you the only ones who know God's Word? (No)

As your Pastor, I did not write this information; I'm simply reading it and applying it to us today. If we didn't author it, we have no right to change it! But because God did author it, we must submit to it!

**V. 37**
This book and chapter is <u>not</u> merely the opinions of Paul, but ***"the commandments of the Lord."***

**V. 38**
If people want to stay in the dark, God says let them!
But for those who want the light, they ought to come to the truth of God's ways.
**V. 39**
Prophesy is desired because all may benefit by it.
Tongues were not to be forbidden because they were a gift of the Holy Spirit for that time and God's purpose.
**V. 40**
The summary: Everything in church ought to be done properly and in an orderly manner.
Will you do your part to see that such order is always maintained in every classroom and ministry of this church?

God wants "Order in the church"!

# Bible Answers to the Charismatic Movement
# An Expositional Study of I Corinthians 12, 13, 14

*Basic Summary*

*1 Corinthians 12, 13, 14 are ONE UNIT of THOUGHT describing the true work of the Holy Spirit in order to combat the carnal Corinthians' desire to selfishly gain the spotlight and speak in tongues.*

## I. I Corinthians 12 – HOLY SPIRIT produced CHURCH UNITY with DIVERSITY

***(God never intended that everyone of His children speak in tongues)***

***Do not be ignorant about how the Holy Spirit works!**

*How do I discern whether a message, gift, or movement is a work of the Holy Spirit or not?* Take a look at the product of the Holy Spirit:

**1. The Holy Spirit Preaches a SINGULAR Message (v.2-3)**

*When the Holy Spirit speaks...*

a. His message is CONSISTENT (Never contradictory to His nature, His ways or His Word)

b. His message is CHRIST-CENTERED (Never promoting anyone except Jesus Christ)

**2. The Holy Spirit Provides a VARIETY of Gifts (v.4-11)**

a. Spiritual Gifts come from a common source (v.4-6)

b. Spiritual Gifts come for a common good (v.7)

c. Spiritual Gifts come through a common Spirit (v.8-11)

1) The Holy Spirit gives the Gifts (v.8-10)

2) The Holy Spirit operates the Gifts (v.11a)

3) The Holy Spirit determines the Gifts (v.11b)

**3. The Holy Spirit Produces a UNIFIED Church Body (v.12-31)**

A Unified/Diversified Church Body. Each & every member must see his/her vital role in the Body of Christ!

a. Every member is united by SPIRIT BAPTISM into the Body (v.13)

b. Every member has a DISTINCT FUNCTION in the Body (v.14-17)

c. Every member is placed by DIVINE DESIGN into the Body (v.18)

d. Every member should be viewed as NECESSARY to the Body (v.19-25a)

e. Every member should be CARED FOR in the Body (v.25b-26)

f. Every member should be SATISFIED with their particular gifts in the Body (v.27-30)

## II. I Corinthians 13 – THE SUPREMACY OF LOVE

***(God's people should <u>not</u> be seeking "tongues" but should be seeking <u>Agape LOVE</u>)***

*** Biblical LOVE must be the supreme characteristic of your life.**

Why? 4 Reasons:

**1. BIBLICAL LOVE IS AN <u>ESSENTIAL</u> VIRTUE (v. 1-3)**

a. Without love your <u>message</u> accomplishes nothing (v. 1)
b. Without love your <u>gifts</u> (abilities) reveal you to be nothing (v. 2)
c. Without love your <u>sacrifice</u> profits you nothing (v. 3)

**2. BIBLICAL LOVE IS AN <u>EXALTED</u> VIRTUE (v. 4-7)**

a. Biblical love is not <u>self-centered</u> (v. 4b-5a)
b. Biblical love does <u>not seek the harm of others</u> (v. 5b-6a)
c. Biblical love seeks <u>the well-being of others</u> (v. 4a, 7)

**3. BIBLICAL LOVE IS AN <u>ETERNAL</u> VIRTUE (v. 8-13)**

a. Love will outlast <u>gifts</u> (v. 8)
b. Love will outlast <u>present limitations</u> (v.9-12)
c. Love will outlast <u>some present spiritual virtues</u> (v.13)

## III. Corinthians 14 - WORDS that BUILD UP

***(God's people should not speak in tongues that don't edify but use <u>words that build up</u> the church! (v.12)***

*5 Reasons why you should use your tongue to proclaim truth in an intelligible manner:*

**1. Our message should be <u>CLEAR</u> not cryptic (v.2-3)**

*<u>Tongues</u>: Mysterious Message* *<u>Prophecy (Preaching)</u>: Clear Message*

**2. Our message should be <u>OTHERS-CENTERED</u> not self-centered (v.4)**

*<u>Tongues</u>: Ego-Centric* *<u>Prophecy (Preaching)</u>: Others-Centered*

**3. Our message should <u>EDIFY</u> not mystify (v.5)**

*<u>Tongues</u>: Inferior Gift* *<u>Prophecy (Preaching)</u>: Superior Gift*

**4. Our message should <u>PROFIT</u> not be detrimental (v.6)**

<u>Tongues</u>: No Profit (w/o Interpretation) <u>Prophecy (Preaching)</u>: Beneficial

**5. Our message should be <u>RATIONAL</u> not illogical (v.7-17)**

<u>Tongues</u>: Unintelligible <u>Prophecy (Preaching)</u>: Understandable

***5 Illustrations of the need for understandable communication:***

a. **<u>Musical Instruments</u>** must communicate an understandable message (v.7-8)
b. **<u>Language</u>** <u>in General</u> must communicate an understandable message (v.9-11)
c. **<u>Prayer</u>** must communicate an understandable message (v.13-15a)
d. **<u>Songs</u>** must communicate an understandable message (v.15b)
e. **<u>Praise</u>** <u>(Testimonies)</u> must communicate an understandable message (v.16-17)