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

By: Pastor Vincent Sawyer
Faith Baptist Church, Corona, NY

How the HOLY SPIRIT Works

(Part 1)

I Corinthians 12:1-31

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)

(To be continued)

Introduction: (Verse 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)

V. 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 CHRIST-CENTERED (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 NOT 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 VARIETY 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 results of His grace. 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!

CONCLUSION:

__(name someone)__, you have a gift the Holy Spirit gave you to use in His ministry.

Can you imagine what would take place if every member of every local Body started utilizing his/her gifts for the profit of Christ's church??

(The problem is, that far too many of God's people just idly sit in the Body of Christ like an appendix. Do not do anything, except cause trouble once in a while.)

Man's greatest knowledge is to know the will of God; man's greatest privilege is to do the will of God.

No Christian is fulfilled or completely joyful until he/she fulfills the purpose for which he/she was saved. God has a plan for you! If you surrender your life to Him, He will utilize the gift He has given to you.

The Holy Spirit Produces....

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

(To be continued)

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 FBC, it is amazing how 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 aid 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 CARED FOR 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 receiving 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 ESSENTIAL VIRTUE (v. 1-3)

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

A. Without love your message 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 repulsive without love, cold, abrasive (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 giving, 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 EXALTED 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 self-centered (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 - envy 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 <u>not seek the harm of others</u> (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 <u>not impute</u> sin."*
II Cor. 5:19 - *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, <u>not imputing</u> 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 <u>hurts</u> the one who committed it.
Sin calls for the chastisement of God upon the wrong doer.
Sin <u>grieves</u> 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 <u>the well-being of others</u> (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 <u>gossips</u>.
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 <u>expect</u> what is best in another person.
Hope knows no pessimism.
Paul said, *"I am <u>confident</u> 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 <u>children</u>, we don't quit! Our <u>mate</u>, etc.
Those who have Agape Love do not allow problematic people to rob them of their joy nor will power to go on.

Love as used in other passages:

WHO are we to love?
--Those that labor in the ministry (I Th. 5:13)
--Wives (Eph. 5:25)
--Husbands and children (Ti. 2:4)
--One another in church (Heb. 10:24 - We are to *"provoke one another unto love"*)
--All the saints (Col. 1:4)

WHAT are we NOT to love?
--Our own selves (in a selfish sense; II Tim. 3:2; Rev. 12:11; Jn. 12:25)
--Worldly pleasures (II Tim. 3:4)
--Money (I Tim. 6:10)
--This world system (I Jn. 2:15)
--Having the pre-eminence

HOW are we to love?
--Without hypocrisy (Rom. 12:9)
--As you would a brother (Rom. 12:10)
--Not pretended (II Cor. 6:6)
--Sincerely (II Cor. 8:8)
--With service (Gal. 5:13)
--With forbearance (Eph. 4:12)
--With truth (Eph. 4:15)
--With a lifestyle (*"walk in love"* - Eph. 5:2)
--Even when we are not loved (II Cor. 12:15)
--With labor (I Thes. 1:3)
--As you already naturally love yourself (Ja. 2:8)
--With deeds and truth (I Jn. 3:18)
--At all times (Prov. 17:17)

"For me to love the world is no chore!
My only real problem is my neighbor next door."

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 <u>present limitations</u> (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 <u>present</u> limited sight to <u>future</u> personal sight (I Jn . 3:2).
We will go from <u>present</u> limited knowledge to <u>future</u> perfect knowledge.

C. Love will outlast <u>some present spiritual virtues</u> (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 <u>sight</u>
2) In Heaven, **hope** will be replaced by <u>reality</u>
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 hunt after, to pursue 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 prioritizing 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 words we say.
Hence, Paul's emphasis on the word *"prophesy."*

"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 CLEAR not cryptic (v.2-3)

Tongues: Mysterious Message *Prophecy: 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 (EX: When James Cherian speaks in Malialam or Hindi, it is a mystery to me).

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 <u>RATIONAL</u> not illogical (v.7-17)
<u>Tongues</u>: Unintelligible <u>Prophecy</u>: 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. **<u>Musical Instruments</u>** 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 <u>not</u> 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. **<u>Language</u>** <u>in General</u> 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 <u>air."</u>***
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. **<u>Prayer</u>** 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 <u>for</u> us in intercession, not <u>through</u> 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 <u>vain</u>, not praying in <u>vain</u> 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 <u>miraculous sign gift</u>

1. **"Miracle"** = a <u>supernatural</u> event that occurs in the <u>physical</u> world by the direct <u>power</u> of God for the purpose of <u>proving</u> 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 <u>sign</u> gifts is to confirm (authenticate) a <u>message</u> or <u>messenger</u>.

   Examples:
   --A message confirmed - Heb. 2:3-4
   --Messengers (apostles) confirmed - II Cor. 12:12

What is the <u>PROBLEM</u> 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. <u>Prophetical</u> Passage - foretold by Jesus, Mark 16:17

B. <u>Historical</u> 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. <u>Doctrinal</u> Passage - the church in Corinth, I Cor. 12:1-14:40
There is a great need to understand I Cor. 12-14 in its <u>context</u>!
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 <u>corrective</u> in nature. Paul does not condone their practices but actually condemns and corrects their practices (one such practice was their speaking in tongues).

<u>Chapter 12</u>
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.

<u>Chapter 13</u>
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).

<u>Chapter 14</u>
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**.

ILLUS: Our church is bilingual (in some cases trilingual) for the most part. How would it make you feel if you were in a group of people who knew your language fluently, but they spoke in their own language about something wonderful. You would feel left out (rejected) and curious. They would be wrong for doing it.

But suppose you were a person who just mocked, made fun of, and didn't believe what that same group always talked about. So then they said, "OK, this guy doesn't want what we have to say. Let's leave him out, by speaking in our second language that he doesn't know." They would be justified for doing this. You don't deserve to hear.

This is what God did by sending tongues.

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 <u>not</u> for:

1) <u>Self-edification</u> but a sign of judgment
2) <u>Entertainment or amusement</u> but a sign of judgment
3) <u>Spreading the Gospel to other nationalities</u> but a sign of judgment
4) <u>The benefit of the assembly</u> of believers (church) but a sign of judgment
5) <u>private use</u> but for <u>public</u> as a sign of judgment
6) a sign that you finally had the <u>Holy Spirit</u> (Paul said not all spoke in tongues; but all had the Holy Spirit)

Because tongues is a sign of judgment for Israel - it is <u>a sign of **blessing**</u> for Gentiles.

<u>God's judgment of Israel</u>:

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 <u>objective proof</u> 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 <u>Samaritans</u> were saved, they spoke in tongues (Acts 8:17, 18)
--When the <u>Gentiles</u> were saved, they spoke in tongues (10:46)
--When the <u>proselytes of John</u> 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 <u>purpose</u> was done. (it was a temporary sign gift).

ILLUS: If a store kept the signs up saying "Grand Opening Sale" 100 years after it began, we would say the manager was crazy!
The church has bene in existence now for about 2,000 years. Israel does not need God to still give the sign to them for 2,000 years. They got the message long ago!

Ill. Signs to NYC are not needed when you are in NYC.
ex. NYC 100 miles ahead, 75...,50...,25...

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 proof of spiritual maturity.

1. Proof of spiritual maturity does not come from the gifts 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 sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

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 not practiced according to the rules laid down in Scripture.

1. First: Tongues speaking must acknowledge the Lordship of Christ (I Cor. 12:3).

2. Second: There must be an interpreter (I Cor. 14:5, 27, 28).

   Edification 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:

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 <u>UNDERSTANDABLE MESSAGE</u> (v.23-25)
(Not Madness & Chaos)

II. God expects a church to tailor all activity to...
An <u>EDIFYING MINISTRY</u> (v.26)
(Not show-offs or self-entertainment)

III. God expects a church to follow...
An <u>ORDERLY METHODOLOGY</u> (v.27-33)
(Not commotion & confusion)

IV. God expects a church to submit to...
<u>MALE LEADERSHIP</u> (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 <u>not</u> 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 <u>UNDERSTANDABLE MESSAGE</u> (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 <u>EDIFYING MINISTRY</u> (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:
--<u>Layman participation</u> in the service
--<u>Diversified types</u> of service
--All with a <u>unified purpose</u> of <u>edifying</u> 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).

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

Note four Bible principles establishing male leadership in the church assembly.

A. The distinct ROLES 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

B. The QUALIFICATIONS of the pastor (*"bishop"* = overseer) demands male leadership in the church

1. 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 *"elders"* (*"presbuteroi")* (v. 17) of the Ephesian Church. He refers to these same men as *"overseers" ("bishops - episcopoi")* (v. 28), and commands them to *"feed" ("poimaino - pastor")* the church of God (v. 28b).
Peter exhorted the "*elders"* to *"shepherd"* (pastor) the flock by taking the *"oversight"* (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 man desires the office" (v. 1)
"The husband of one wife" (v. 2)
"He (v. 1). . . *he* (v. 5) . . . *he* (v. 6) . . . *he* (v. 7)"
"If a man know not how to rule his own house..."

2. 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)

C. 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 not mean to seize authority (as if, on the other hand, she can have that authority if it is given 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) Creation order (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. The Fall (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.

D. 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)
--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).

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).

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."*)

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)

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

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 not be seeking "tongues" but should be seeking Agape LOVE)

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

Why? 4 Reasons:

1. 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)

2. 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)

3. 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)

III. Corinthians 14 - WORDS that BUILD UP

(God's people should not speak in tongues that don't edify but use words that build up the church! (v.12)

5 Reasons why you should use your tongue to proclaim truth in an intelligible manner:

1. Our message should be CLEAR not cryptic (v.2-3)

Tongues: Mysterious Message *Prophecy (Preaching): Clear Message*

2. Our message should be OTHERS-CENTERED not self-centered (v.4)

Tongues: Ego-Centric *Prophecy (Preaching): Others-Centered*

3. Our message should EDIFY not mystify (v.5)

Tongues: Inferior Gift *Prophecy (Preaching): Superior Gift*

4. Our message should PROFIT not be detrimental (v.6)

Tongues: No Profit (w/o Interpretation) Prophecy (Preaching): Beneficial

5. Our message should be RATIONAL not illogical (v.7-17)

Tongues: Unintelligible Prophecy (Preaching): 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)