

1 Corinthians 12

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Tape #8147
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Let's turn in our Bibles now to 1 Corinthians chapter twelve. It is interesting that the church in Corinth, Paul declared, did not come behind in any spiritual gift. And yet in the church in Corinth, there were many problems. Some of them involved the use of the gifts of the Spirit. So in chapters twelve, thirteen and fourteen, Paul is going to write to them about the gifts of the Spirit and their proper use in the church, warning them against the abuses that existed there in the church in Corinth. So here we have the Biblical teaching on the gifts of the Spirit and their proper use.

So he opens the chapter by saying, *Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:* You notice the word "gifts" is in italics, it was added there by the translators. It comes further down in the text, but in the original writings, it did not exist there in the first verse. But, they put the word, "gifts" to give you an understanding of the issue that Paul is going to be talking about. Talking about Spiritual gifts. I do not want you to be ignorant. There was a lot of ignorance in the church of Corinth, even as there is a lot of ignorance in the church today, concerning the proper use of the gifts of the Spirit. So as we look at Paul's instruction, we will come to a proper understanding of how the gifts are intended by God to be used in the life of the believer and in the church.

Paul said first of all, ²*You know that you were Gentiles (pagans), carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.* At one time you were living in the flesh. You were without God and without Christ. You were without the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was dead. You were pagan. You were worshipping idols. And that was at one time. Now you have come into a new life. A life of the Spirit and this life of the Spirit is a total new life.

Paul said to the Ephesians, and you He has made alive, that is Spiritually, who were dead in your trespasses and sins. Jesus said, to Nicodemus, you must be born again. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. And so you were once pagan living in the flesh and after the flesh and all you knew was the life of the flesh. But now you have been born by the Spirit and you've come into this Spiritual life. So concerning the Spiritual and that could be gifts of the Spiritual life. I don't want you to be ignorant. What it is to live in the Spirit and to walk in the Spirit, to be led by the Spirit. You were once led by your passions as a pagan, following after the pagan gods.

³*Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed,* (Now there are rumors, none of them verified. It always happened that someone heard of someone who heard of an experience of where someone had. It's so far removed that you can never trace it, but supposedly there was a service where some person got up and spoke in tongues. Someone was there that understood the language and they were saying horribly, blasphemous things as they were speaking in tongues. That's a rumor that has been since the time of the church of Corinth. Some of these rumors have ancient roots. So Paul writing to the Corinthians said, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed. Not so! Impossible!

A lot of times these rumors are spread to discourage people from the gifts of the Spirit, especially the gift of tongues. Since that you don't understand what you are saying, they suggest that you might be possessed by some evil spirit and as you are speaking in tongues, you are actually blaspheming Christ. Let me just say those who are saying such things are close to blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said, concerning our heavenly Father, if we, earthly fathers, have a child who comes to us and he asks us for bread, we are not for bread, going to give him a stone. If he asks for fish we are not going to give him a scorpion. If he asks for an egg, we are not going to give him a serpent. He said if you being earthly fathers, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those that ask Him? If you are seeking God for the fullness of the Spirit, you do not have to worry about some kind of spurious experience that Satan will come and take over because you are opening your heart to God. That is a blasphemous concept of God. You earthly fathers wouldn't do that to your

children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those that ask Him. So that no man, speaking by the Spirit can call Jesus accursed.

In the same token *and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit*. The confession that Jesus Christ is Lord is a confession that we are brought to by the Spirit. It is the Spirit of God that convicts us of our sinful state. It is the Spirit of God that points us to Jesus Christ as the only answer for our sin. And when we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord, it is by the Holy Spirit that we declare that Jesus Christ is Lord! You can not truly declare that except by the work of the Holy Spirit within your heart and within your life.

⁴*There are diversities of gifts* (And here the word “gifts” is used in the Greek.), *but the same Spirit*. Paul is going to list for us in a moment, some of the diversities of gifts, not a complete list (verses 28-30). In Romans chapter twelve, Paul gives us a further listing of some of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Down at the end of chapter twelve, (Romans 12:3-8), there will be a further listing of gifts that aren’t listed in the first nine, that he gives us in the first part of the chapter. So there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit. The unity and in this chapter, Paul is going to stress the unity of the body of Christ. Though there are diversities of gifts, it is one Spirit.

⁵*There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord*. There are diversities of ministries or administration, but it is the same Lord. Now there are the gifts of the Spirit, which we will be dealing with. Then there are administrative gifts, that Paul will deal with at the end of the chapter. He deals more fully in Romans chapter twelve with the administrative gifts within the body of Christ. There are diversities of these administrations, these gifts of administration but there is the same Lord, the same Spirit, the same Lord.

⁶*And there are diversities of activities* (or operation), *but it is the same God who works all in all*. So, the same Spirit, the same Lord, the same God, you have the Trinity here in the operation of the gifts. And there are diversities of operation or activities.

Now, here is the interesting thing. Several people may have a similar gift of the Spirit, but it operates in different people in different ways. It doesn’t follow always the same pattern. In other words the gift of the Spirit may operate in my life in one way. The same gift may operate in your life in another way.

The gift of prophecy, the Lord plants in my mind the thoughts, the ideas and I express them. But I have them first implanted in my mind by the Spirit. That’s the way the gift of prophecy operates in my life. You may have the gift of prophecy, but it may operate differently in your life. It doesn’t have to operate in your life like it operates in my life.

We make a great mistake in trying to pattern God. It’s always it seems, attempting to reduce God to a formula. And we want, you know, well how did it happen to you? What did it feel like? And what did you think? Where were you? Well, I was lying under the piano when I was filled the Spirit, you know. So you think, well, I’ve got to be lying down under the pew someplace or under the piano. We try to pattern.

Now the Bible says if there is any sick among you, let them call for the elders of the church and let them anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord and the prayer of faith will save the sick and the Lord will raise them up. And so many times we’ve been called out to pray for the sick. And some times God heals them instantly. Sometimes the healing is a process and sometimes they die. Differences of operation.

I remember being called to pray for this little girl who was very sick. She had a very high temperature. So some of the elders went with me over to the home. We prayed for this little girl. We laid hands on her. I had my hand on her forehead. As we were praying that God would heal her, as I laid my hand on her forehead, I felt her hot, hot little forehead. But as we were praying, I felt the fever just leave. It just left. And by the time we were through with our prayer, her forehead was cool. And she was instantly healed.

Now I thought, now just how did I lay my hands on her? What did I say? Ooh, you know, it worked! What did I do, you know? We’re so anxious to get it formulized so that we can do it again. But it doesn’t always happen that way. There are diversities of operation. People react and respond to the Spirit in different ways. We can have different feelings, different sensations.

When Dr. Finny received the empowering of the Holy Spirit in his life, he said, it felt like there were liquid waves of love just flowing over him, overwhelming him. He was just engulfed in these liquid waves of love, just one after another, just flowing over him. And he said, he finally had to say, oh Lord, I can’t handle any more. You’re going to have to stop. I just can’t handle any more. And so we say, oh, liquid

waves of love, that sounds great, you know. Lord, give me the liquid waves of love, you know. Because we are trying to formulize the way the Spirit works. But there are diversities of operations.

You can see it through the Book of Acts as they received the Holy Spirit. Through the Book of Acts, there were no two cases that were identical. There was a variety in each case. Sometimes it was while they were just praying together that the Holy Spirit came upon them. Later on while Peter and John laid their hands on the people, the apostles laying their hands on the people they received the Holy Spirit.

With the case of Paul in Damascus, it was a disciple that laid his hands on Paul. In the house of Cornelius, while Peter was just preaching, the Holy Spirit came on them. With the church in Ephesus, Paul laid his hands on them and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. It was always different because there are diversities of operation. So we don't try to formulate and regulate how the Spirit might work in an individual's life nor do we look to have a copy of someone else's experience. So diversities of operations, but it's the same God who is working all and in all.

⁷*But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:* God doesn't give people the gifts of the Spirit for their own personal profit. And it is absolutely wrong to seek to personally profit over the gifts of the Spirit. And this is a trap that many have fallen into. When God moves in your heart and moves through your life to touch someone else. Often times they are extremely grateful. God has touched. God has healed. God has worked. And they are so grateful because you were the instrument that God used in touching their lives that they want to respond.

We had a fellow come in. He was a very wealthy man. His son was strung out on drugs. He had come to Calvary Chapel. He accepted the Lord. His life was transformed. He incidentally now is one of the Calvary Chapel pastors. But his father was so grateful. He didn't know what to do with this boy. He was strung out on drugs and his life was a total mess. They didn't know what to do. They had sort of given up. And when he came and he received Christ, his life was so transformed, the father was so grateful. He came into my office and he sat down. He took out his checkbook. He said how much do you want? I said I don't want anything! He said how much do you need? Every church has a need. I said we don't need anything. He couldn't understand that. But that is the response that people have when they have had a work of God in their life. They want to respond to it, but the gifts aren't for personal profit. The use and the exercises of the gifts of the Spirit are for the whole church to profit by it and not for an individual's profit. So the profit is to be to all of the church. That is the purpose of the gifts that the whole church might be profited by the exercise of those gifts within the body of Christ, for the profit of all.

for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, In the Book of Acts, chapter fifteen, there developed a problem in the Gentile church of Antioch because there were certain brethren who came to the church in Antioch to spy out their liberty in Christ. They began to create division in the church there because they, being from the Jewish traditional background, felt that a Gentile can't be saved. And so they told these Gentile believers, you are not really saved. You can't be saved unless you have been circumcised and you keep the law of Moses. So Paul heard about the thing that these fellows were teaching and he got a hold of them. He said, where in the world did you get this? They said we have come with the authority of the church in Jerusalem.

Paul said well let's go back to the church in Jerusalem. Let's get this thing settled right now. You are causing a division in the body of Christ here. So Paul took some of the brethren from the church in Antioch. He took these Jews back to the church in Jerusalem. They called the first church council in Acts fifteen to determine whether or not the Gentiles should be required to keep the law of Moses and to follow the traditions in order to be saved, that is do they have to become a Jew in order to be saved? So as the church body gathered to deal with the issue, Peter first of all shared how God called him to the Gentiles. Then Paul and Barnabas shared of the marvelous miracles of the working of the Holy Spirit among the Gentiles.

Then we read that James said unto them. My sentence is that we trouble them not, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God, but that we write unto them that they abstain from the pollution of idols and from fornication and from things that are strangled and from blood. For Moses of old times has in every city those that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath Day. So it pleased the apostles and the elders with the whole church. In other words, James came up with the right answer. Let's just write to them

and welcome them as brothers in Christ and just suggest that they not commit fornication, that they abstain from idolatry and from the things that have been strangled and from blood. If they do that they do well. Everyone was satisfied, the issue was solved. That was the word of wisdom that God gave to James because the result was that it solved the difficult problem that had developed.

Of course in the Old Testament we find the word of wisdom. Solomon was gifted with the words of wisdom and the examples of Solomon's wisdom.

When I was just a young pastor, just the second church that I was pastoring in my early twenties, we had an annual church picnic. We were living in Tucson. On the fourth of July we had our fourth of July picnic up at Mount Lemon. It's up some six thousand feet. You get out of the desert heat up in the cool mountains and it's a great for a fourth of July picnic. Well, Arizona State had a lovely park up with facilities and tables you know the rest room facilities with running water. It was an ideal place for a picnic even room to play ball. So we had some people though that had come into the church and they happened to own a lot up at the top of the mountain. It was a little difficult to get to. You had to go about a mile on a dirt road, but they felt that it would be an ideal place for a fourth of July picnic. But there were no facilities. There was no water. There were no tables. But they thought that we could just have a prayer meeting. Why do we have a picnic? We could just have a prayer meeting. It would be great for the church to just go up to this lot and just pray. So, they talked to some people and talked up the idea. Well, why don't we go up to the top of the hill and just have a prayer meeting? And others were saying, no way, I'm not going to take the kids up to that dirty place. There's no place to wash our hands or to go to the bathroom. So, there was a division. How can you say no we don't want to pray on the fourth of July? You can't put down prayer. So, here you are, you know, with the super spirituals wanting the prayer meeting and practical people were just wanting a picnic. So it became such an issue that those that wanted the prayer meeting, said, well, if you go to the public park, we're not going. The others were saying, well, if you go that lot, we're not going. So the church was divided. So, pastor, where are we going to have our picnic? Boy, you need at that point, the gift of the word of wisdom. I knew that you are in a catch twenty-two, with either answer you are going to develop a certain amount of animosity against you. So I said, well, let's let the church board decide that. So the church board wisely decided to go to the state park. We had a great picnic. But these people that were upset over that, I would say, well you know, the church board decided and you know, God has probably given them wisdom and so let's just flow with it. You know, walk in love.

In the Book of Genesis, we find the word of wisdom given to Joseph. The Pharaoh said who is wiser than you? Of course Solomon prayed, God, give me wisdom. And God said I have given you wisdom.

to another the word of knowledge (Then there is knowledge. Now wisdom is the proper application of knowledge. There are people who are very knowledgeable but they are not very smart. That is they don't have much wisdom. Solomon said with all of your understanding, get wisdom. Wisdom is the principal thing, he said. The knowledge without wisdom can be dangerous. This is what we have today. There are a lot of people extremely knowledgeable but they are not very wise. So we have the word of knowledge. Now this is knowing things supernaturally. Things you would not have known by natural deduction, but just by revelation of the Spirit.

In the early church, there developed sort an early movement, that the believers, in showing their dedication to the Lord, and because they were expecting Jesus to come back immediately, many of them sold their possessions. They brought the money and placed at the apostles feet. Then the church made distribution to all of those who were in need. There was a certain couple, Ananias and Sapphira who sold their possessions. They brought a portion of the money, not all of it, but they were acting like they were giving it all. So when Ananias came in and laid the money at Peter's feet, he said is that how much you sold it for? He said, yep. Peter said, why has Satan deceived your heart to lie against the Holy Spirit? You haven't lied to man. You've lied to God! Now Peter would have had no way of knowing that except by the Holy Spirit. It was the word of knowledge as he was declaring the truth to Ananias. And by the word of knowledge, he realized that Ananias was in hypocrisy, pretending to give everything, when actually he was holding back some.

Proverbs tells us for the Lord gives wisdom and out of its mouth comes knowledge and understanding.

Now, one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge *through the same Spirit*,

⁹*to another faith by the same Spirit*, In Acts, the third chapter, we find Peter and John going in to the temple at the hour of prayer. There was a lame man about forty years old, who was daily brought by friends. He was placed next to the gate, called beautiful, which was near Solomon's porch. He would beg alms from the people going in to worship God. So as Peter and John were passing by, as they were entering the temple to pray, the man sought alms from them. Peter said, look at us! The man turned, expecting to receive something. Peter said, I don't have any silver or gold, but what I have, I will give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand to your feet and walk. Peter lifted him to his feet and immediately he was healed. He received strength. He began to walk and jump and praise God. The people around saw him walking and jumping up and down. They said, isn't that the lame man? Others said, it sure looks like him. How is it that he is walking? We don't know.

Then he began to grab and hug Peter. People began to relate the miracle to Peter. So as they began to look at Peter as though he was really a super saint. He said you men of Israel, hold on a minute! Why do marvel at this? Or why do you look on us as though we through our own righteousness or good deeds have done this good work to this lame man? Be it known unto you that it is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth that he is walking. And it is through faith in His name that he has been made whole. For it is the faith which is by Him. So Peter is saying, it really isn't my faith. He gave me the faith. It was the gift of faith in operation. The Lord gave to Peter at that moment, the faith. That is the gift of faith.

There are times when God just gives you the faith to do something. It doesn't always come. But there are times when you just have the faith. It's going to happen. God is going work. He gives you that gift of faith. We try so hard to work it out. We try so hard to work up faith. You can't! It's a gift and it isn't always there. But in particular circumstances and all, it is there.

Several years ago, when we were in the little chapel over on Sunflower and Greenville, after the morning service, some kids wheeled their grandfather up to the front. I was standing in the front and they wheeled their grandfather up to me. He was in a wheelchair. They said, Chuck, would you pray for our granddad? I said sure. I laid hands on him. I had just read Acts three, Peter lifted the guy to his feet. I thought well, why don't I lift him to his feet? I mean Peter did it. So I lifted the guy out of the wheelchair onto his feet. I said in the name of Jesus, walk! And the guy started walking! The kids were doing cartwheels, almost, they were so excited. Grandpa is walking! And he walked up and down the aisle. Then the kids told me, he had a cold, we wanted you to pray for his cold, you know. Why didn't you tell me? Now I don't know where I got that faith. I don't lift people out of wheelchairs. I don't make a practice out of that at all. But it was just at that instant that I had the faith that this man can be healed. And it was the gift of faith in operation.

Now the following Wednesday night, we had gone down to Tucson to have Thanksgiving with our relatives there. I spoke in the church in Tucson. I had pastored it years earlier. So they asked me to speak that Wednesday night for the Thanksgiving service. After the service a man came up, his wife was in the wheelchair, he was pushing her in the wheelchair. He said, Chuck, my wife has had a stroke. Would you pray that God would heal her? So I prayed, laid hands on her and prayed that God would heal her. Then I patted her on the shoulder and said, God bless you, sister. We'll continue to pray for her. As he wheeled her out, my son, Chuck Jr., said, hey dad, why didn't you lift her out like you did that guy last Sunday? I said, the Lord didn't give the faith for that. I mean I didn't feel impressed. I didn't have any impulses to lift her up. The Lord didn't give me the faith for it. So it's something that is one of those intangibles. Sometimes you have the faith, sometimes you don't. It's a gift and the fact that it is a gift of faith is manifested in that sometimes you have it and sometimes you don't. It's not a reservoir. It's not something that's just there. Hey, I've got it, man and any time you want something, just come along and I'll do it. It's not that way. It's just comes. It's a gift when it's there, but it isn't a reservoir.

Even as the word of knowledge, word of wisdom, it isn't that I have this great reservoir of knowledge, just ask me anything, I'll be glad share with you. Any problems? Just come to me, I've got the answers. It doesn't work that way. Sometimes it's there, sometimes it isn't. It's not just a reservoir. It's something that the Spirit maintains the control of. He gives to you at the moment, what you need for that moment.

In the ministry of the Word, the gift of word of wisdom, word of knowledge and word of prophecy is often exercised. As I am teaching I often am using the gift of the word of wisdom or word of knowledge or using the gift of prophecy. When the anointing of the Spirit is there, the gifts are in operation, hey, it's great! But every once in a while, the Lord pulls the plug, just so you don't get puffed up and think, man I've got it. I know how! I can do it, you know. He'll pull the plug. I mean it is a push! I would be better off just to close the Bible and say, well folks be in prayer. Next week maybe something will happen, you know. It's exciting when God is working.

Often times when we are speaking, we'll use an illustration. A thought will come into my mind, an illustration to the truth. I'll paint this picture to illustrate the truth. I don't get a buzz—a word of wisdom is coming. It doesn't work that way. I just have, you know, an idea and thought. You just express it. Later on you find out that it was a word of wisdom. We've had people that have friends to the church. As we were talking we were laying out their friends situation, so graphically that they weren't friends anymore. I mean they went away angry. They said, it was wrong of you to tell the pastor and tell him about us before we came! And Paul said if you are exercising prophecy the secrets of men's hearts will be revealed. They will know that God is in you of a truth.

One night as we were speaking, of course the services are broadcast on radio throughout the area, we were in 2 Peter. We were talking about the false prophets, who through feigned words will make merchandise of the people. And we started talking about paper missionaries, ministries that are not ministries. False and fake ministries who sent out computerized letters to their mailing lists. They live off the mailing lists. They send out these pleas through the mail and you know, the monthly support. There is always that return envelope and the whole thing. These letters each month that give these things that they are needing, what God is doing and the glorious work. But, you know, please send your money. Keep this work going. God is broke and He's going to be in bankruptcy court today, you know. Help us out of this desperate situation. They live off that. They know the buttons to push. They have their mailing lists. They live off the mailing lists. The next morning, the secretary said, Chuck, you've got a fellow on the phone insisting to talk to you. He sounds really mad! I said, well, put him through. So he said, I want you to know I have a true ministry. I said, what? My ministry is a genuine ministry and I don't appreciate you telling all the people that it's a false ministry. I said, who are you? He said, you know I live down on Lido Isle and I have a white Cadillac convertible and all. I said wait a minute, wait a minute! I was just making that up. I don't know anything about you. I've never heard about you before. But it was the word of knowledge being exercised. It gets you in trouble sometimes. It's the way the gift operates.

The gift of faith. Peter said it wasn't my faith. It was the faith which is of Him that this man stands here before you whole.

In the fourteenth chapter of Acts, in verses eight and nine, there was a certain man at Lystra, who was lame. He had been a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. And the same man was listening to Paul speak. He was steadfastly looking at Paul. Paul perceived that he had faith to be healed. He said with a loud voice, stand on your feet! And the man leaped up and walked. When the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, the gods have come down! They look like men. But here was Paul. He perceived that this man had the faith. He was exercising the discernment of spirit, but he discerned that this man had faith to be healed. And so he spoke to the man, stand on your feet and walk. And the man did. So it was the gift of faith.

another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, Then there are the gifts of healing. Anytime that God has touched you and healed you, you have received a gift of healing. I have received many gifts of healing. I believe that God has blessed me with excellent health.

In all of the years of ministry, I've only missed being in the pulpit once because I wasn't really feeling well. It was while we were here. We were in triple services. We were in the little church over on Greenville. I woke up one Sunday morning and I felt just weak, dizzy. I couldn't collect my thoughts. My mind was just in a whirl. So I went down and woke up Chuck Jr. I said, Chuck, you're going to have to speak for me this morning. So he got up and he went out and preached the first service. During that first service, no doubt, when he said that Chuck is sick. He can't be here for church today, there were so many

people praying for me. As I was lying there in bed, suddenly I felt great! I was healed. So I got up and got dressed and went out to the next two services. I was healed instantly! I received a gift of healing.

God does heal. He does heal the sick. The Bible tells us if there are any sick among us, let them call for the elders of the church. Let them anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. A prayer of faith will save the sick. The Lord will raise them up. So on Saturday night we have the elders back in the back part of the building there in the prayer room praying for the sick. Those that want to come, be anointed with oil and prayed for. The elders are back there praying for the sick according to the Scriptures. And when God touches and heals a person, they've received a gift of healing. God has done some marvelous healings, cancers and everything else. We've seen God work and heal people.

Then ¹⁰*to another the working of miracles*, We find examples of that in the Book of Acts. When Peter prayed for Dorcas and she was raised from the dead, that was a miracle!

We read concerning Paul, when he was ministering in Ephesus in the nineteenth chapter of Acts, we read there in verse eleven that God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul. So that from his body were brought to the sick people, handkerchiefs or sweat bands and the diseases departed from them and the evil spirits went out of them. That was the working of miracles, special miracles by the hands of Paul.

Then the gift of prophecy, *to another prophecy*, In Acts chapter twenty one we read of this prophet by the name of Agabus, who was in the church in Jerusalem. When Paul was there in Caesarea, staying with Philip, before going up to Jerusalem, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. When he came unto us, he took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet. He said thus saith the Holy Spirit, so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle. They shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. When we heard these things, both we and they that were of that place begged Paul not go up to Jerusalem. Paul answered what do you mean, weeping? Do you want to break my heart? I'm ready not only to be bound, but to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. So this prophet Agabus.

Now it isn't always foretelling the future. It can just be speaking forth the word of God. In the Old Testament, when you are speaking for God, it is the gift of prophecy.

In the fourteenth chapter, Paul will teach a little bit about the gift of prophecy. He that prophesies, he said, speaks to the church for edification, for exhortation and for comfort. It's ministry to the body of Christ, God speaking to His people. And there are those that just have that gift of speaking forth God's truth to the people. It is the exercise of the gift of prophecy.

And then David said on his dying bed. The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me and His word was in my tongue. Peter acknowledges that David was a prophet. David acknowledges that it was God that spoke by him. It was God's word that was in his tongue.

to another discerning of spirits, The gift of discerning of spirits, there in the eighth chapter of Acts, we find an example of that beginning with verse twenty. We read that Philip had gone up to Samaria to preach Christ to them. Many believed and were baptized. They saw the miracles and all that were wrought by Philip. When the church in Jerusalem heard that the Samaritans had received the gospel, they sent unto them Peter and John because as yet the Holy Spirit had not come upon them. As Peter and John laid hands on them, they received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Now there was a certain man, his name was Simon. He was beforehand a sorcerer. But he also believed when he saw the miracles. He was baptized. When he saw that by the laying on of hands, the Holy Spirit was imparted, he said to Peter, how much would it cost me? I would like to buy this gift. I would like to go around and lay hands on people that they would receive the Holy Spirit too. Peter began to exercise the discernment of the Spirit, he said, your money perish with you because you've thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money. You have neither part nor lot in this matter for your heart is not right in the sight of God. Peter was seeing what was in his heart. There was down in his heart, a jealousy. He had lost his position of a prominent man in the community. They all thought that he was a mighty power of God until they saw the genuine power of God through Philip. Then they turned from him and were following now after Jesus Christ. But he was wanting to get some of that attention and glory back. Peter could see his heart. He said to him, your heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent of this wickedness. Perhaps He

might forgive the thoughts of your heart for I perceive (observe) that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. That was the discerning of Spirit. He was what the true heart of the man, was. You're in this gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.

Then there are *to another different kinds of tongues*. We find on the day of Pentecost, that as they were waiting upon the Lord, suddenly there was a sound from heaven like a mighty rushing wind. It filled all the house. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to speak in *glossa* (unknown tongues) as the Spirit gave them the ability or prompted their speech.

Now there were devout Jews who had come for the Feast of Pentecost from all over the world. When this was noised abroad, they gathered together and they said what does this mean? Because they said, we here, are not of these which are speaking, Galileans? How is it that we hear, everyone of us in our own language, their declarations of the marvelous works of God? And there were some seventeen different language groups that understood the various languages that these people were speaking. Now when it talks about the languages, those that understand it, they are speaking of our dialect (*dialektos*) in the Greek. To the disciples it was *glossa* (unknown tongues). It was an unknown tongue. But to those that had gathered, it was a dialect. They are speaking in our dialect. The wonderful work of God.

Then lastly in this particular listing is, *to another the interpretation of tongues*. This is where one person is speaking in another tongue, while another person interprets that which was said, by the Holy Spirit, not by natural understanding of what was said. Not by translating, it's an interpretation. It is a gift of the Spirit. Now, interestingly enough, we don't have any examples that I know of in the New Testament of the exercise of the gift of the interpretation of tongues, but Paul will talk about it more in chapter fourteen.

But there is one interesting example, interestingly enough, in the Old Testament of the interpretation of a tongue, so to speak. You remember when Belshazzar was having his great feast with a thousand of his lords. While he was pretty drunk, he ordered the golden vessels be brought in. These were the vessels that his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the temple in Jerusalem and that had been sanctified in the worship of God. He had them bring in the golden vessels that they might drink their wine out of these vessels from the temple. And as they were drinking their wine out of these vessels and as they were praising their gods of gold and silver, suddenly there appeared a hand. It was writing on the plaster of the walls. Words that they did not know or understand. The king immediately said to his wise-men, what does that say? They said, we don't know. The queen mother said, there was a man from Israel during your grandfather's reign who was able to tell dreams and interpretations and so forth. You call him, he can probably tell you.

So they brought Daniel in. He's an old man now. He's probably close to ninety. They brought him in. He said, tell me what that means and I'll give you this royal coat and do all of the things. Daniel said, keep your stuff, but I'll tell you what it means. Daniel said, the word, *MENE*, means that God has numbered your kingdom and finished it. You're through.

The word, *TEKEL*, you've been weighed in the balances. You've been found wanting.

The word, *UPHARSIN* or *Peres*: Your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians. So Daniel interpreted these words that were written by God upon the wall.

Several years ago when Calvary Chapel was in a transition state, before we had built the little chapel on the next block, we were meeting in the Lutheran church on Sunday afternoon. Then Sunday evening we were using the clubhouse over in Eastbluff for our meetings. It was Pentecost Sunday, and so we had our Bible study. At the end of it, there were just a small group of us, maybe fifty or so at the time. So at the end, we just said it's Pentecost Sunday, let's just worship the Lord and wait upon God. We were in those small, little, intimate type circles. We could do that. I would answer questions. It would be a time of discussion afterwards and times of just waiting upon God in prayer. We had one lady in our fellowship who God gave her the gift of tongues. When she speaks in tongues, she speaks in French. So I said, you know, Pentecost Sunday, when we worship the Lord, why don't you just go ahead and worship the Lord in the tongue? It's such a phenomenal thing to hear her speak in French, that I said why don't you just worship the Lord in the tongue that the Lord had given you? As she began to speak in this language, in French, I could understand some of the French. I have studied Latin. It's one of the romance languages. You could pick up

a word here or there. I could pick up that she was giving thanks for a beautiful song that the Lord had given to her. I thought, my, that's very appropriate. She used to be a night club singer. To thank God and all for the new song that He has put in her heart. It's beautiful, you know. But I didn't try to interpret because I intellectually understood. I didn't want to get my intellect mixed up with the Spirit, so I didn't seek to give the interpretation because I knew that part of it was just my own intellect. But Kay, gave the interpretation. It was beautiful. You know, Lord, you've given me this beautiful new song. The song of love and praise unto You. I will rejoice in Your love and in the songs that you give to me and all. All of us were blessed.

Well, there was a gal there that had been brought there that night by a friend. She was from Palm Springs. She was going through some difficulties and she was brought so that I could talk to her after the meeting. So after people were dismissed and started to leave, she came up. She said that before we get into my situation, she asked, what was going on here? How is it that that lady spoke to the group in French and the other lady translated? I said to her, would you believe that neither of those women know French? She said I wouldn't believe that. I said, well it's true. I said that I know both of them. One of them is my wife. I know that she doesn't know French at all! But this is a gift of the Holy Spirit. I took her into the Scriptures and showed her the gift of tongues and the interpretation. I said that is the gift of the Spirit. What you saw was a gift of the Spirit in operation. She said well she just didn't speak French, she spoke with an aristocratic accent. She said she spoke in the high French. She had an aristocratic accent. I said, well, I would expect that from God.

She said that before I get to my problem, I've got to accept Jesus. I said that will be the end of your problem so let's do it! So she accepted the Lord. I mean she was convinced when she saw the genuine operation of the gift of the Spirit. It so happened she had lived in France for five years, in Paris. She was very wealthy. She came from a Jewish background and was living in Palm Springs. She has spent five years in France and knew French very well and was with the aristocrats there. Yet seeing a genuine demonstration of the gifts in operation, her heart was convinced that this has to be real. You can't just do that. It's just has to be real.

¹¹But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. It may be that He'll give you two or three gifts of the Spirit. Maybe he'll give you more. He divides or distributes to each man individually or severally as He wills. But it's the same Spirit, the same God, the same Lord, the unity, the oneness in the body of Christ. So Paul, naturally bridges from that into the oneness of the body.

¹²For as the body is one (the body of Christ) and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. Now, here is your body. You have many different members. You've got your fingers. You've got your hands. You've got your wrists. You've got your arms. You've got your head, hopefully. You've got your feet. You've got your legs. I mean there are all different parts of your body. Now, all of the parts of your body don't fulfill the same function. They each fulfill a separate function, but they are all needed to be a whole person. You need your eyes. You need your nose. You need your ears. You need your mouth. You need all of these things, though they are separate and have a distinct purpose. Yet they all work together in the one body.

So we have all of these different gifts within the body of Christ. And different people with different gifts, but it should all work together in unity. We are all unified in Jesus Christ. We're not talking about just Calvary Chapel. We're talking about the body of Christ in this community, which is comprised of Episcopalians, of Lutherans, of Baptists, of Presbyterians and all of the different groups. It doesn't matter what name they put over their door. If they are following after Jesus Christ, we are all a part of the one body. We don't all fulfill the same function. God has a purpose for each part of the body of Christ.

God has these ministries in the area that attract and appeal to different people than Calvary Chapel attracts and appeals to. We are fulfilling our place in the body of Christ. But ours isn't the only one. We are only a part of the whole body. We need to see that. We need to guard against exclusivism. To think that we are it you know. That we are the whole thing. Not so! We are just a part of God's total ministry in the area.

When one part of the body is exalted, we all should rejoice. If God is moving in a church over here, and

people are being saved and things are really happening, then let's rejoice! Let's not say well, why did God do it to them and not to us, you know. Let's rejoice that God is working over there! And that God is bringing people unto Himself. We need to see that unity of the whole body of Christ.

¹³For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. And oh, God, help us to see the unity of the body of Christ!

¹⁴For in fact the body is not one member but many. There are many parts to the body.

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

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

¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, (It would be rather grotesque, wouldn't it?) where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? ¹⁸But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. The Holy Spirit divides to each man severally as He will. He sets us in the body as it pleases Him. And God gives us the gifts to be used in the body of Christ, but we work together. We are interdependent upon each other to have the whole body, we've got to have all the parts. You can't just sit home alone and say, well, you know, I'm just going to worship God here at home. I don't need the church. I don't need the fellowship. I can just get it right here at home. No, no, no, you're saying I don't need the whole body. You do! You are a part of the body. You are not the whole body. No one is the whole body.

We are parts of the body and there is that interdependency upon one another. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. We are here at God's pleasure. We are what we are by God's design and pleasure.

¹⁹And if they were all one member, where would the body be? It isn't a body if it's just one part.

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

²¹And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²²No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. Every part of your body is necessary for the full functioning of the body.

Now it's important to realize I'm part of the body. I may not be a very visible or noticeable part, but I am a part of the body and an important part. And though I may not be so visible or prominent, yet I am an important part to the body. I am needed for the whole body to function properly. There are parts of your body that you can't see, but they are surely necessary. The digestive system, it's absolutely necessary. Your brain, you can't see it but it's absolutely necessary. Your heart, your lungs, you don't see them but the necessary parts of the body, so not every part of the body has a prominent place, where everybody sees it.

Now it would be terrible if in our own bodies, we had the striving that we often have in the body of Christ, where a person isn't satisfied to be what God has made them. What if your own body had that kind of a rebellious attitude towards its place in the body? Your big toe would say, I'm tired of this hot, smelly place. It's always dark and damp. I want people to notice me. I want to be planted in the middle of the forehead, where everyone can see me. You have things like that happening in the body of Christ. It gets grotesque. We need to be what God has made us. We need to be satisfied where God has placed us, knowing that He has put us here for His purposes. And though we may not draw attention and all, yet we are important to the whole functioning of the body.

²³And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, There are those here in the body of Christ that have received the gift of intercessory prayer. They are by far, you don't see them, you don't know them. They don't have badges that say I'm an intercessor. Yet what an important part of the body of Christ. We couldn't function. We couldn't be functioning as we are. We wouldn't be blessed as we are if it weren't for this part of the body, these people that are fulfilling that place in the body of intercessory prayer. And so each of us have our place within the body.

On those parts that aren't noticed, God has appointed more abundant beauty. ²⁴*but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it,* You are important in the body of Christ and in the eyes of God. And though men may not know of your ministry, it may not be one of those visible ministries. Yet God sees and God rewards you for your faithfulness of being what God has called you to be and being that part of the body that you have been called to fulfill.

²⁵*that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.* That is this business of wanting to promote myself to the middle of the forehead. But what is desired is that the members should have the same care for one another. We are one body so we have that love and that concern and that care for each other. We are all part of the body. If you are hurting, I hurt. If you are being blessed, I'm being blessed. If you are being honored, I'm being honored, because we are one body. So the blessings and the honor that God is bestowing upon Calvary. He's not bestowing it upon me. He's bestowing upon the whole body here. We are all being blessed. We are being honored because of what God is doing by His Holy Spirit. And thus we all rejoice together in the beautiful work of God's Holy Spirit, that he is accomplishing in our fellowship here at Calvary Chapel.

²⁶*And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.* Now getting back to the big toe. If someone stomps on it, where do you hurt? Yes, all over. If they break the toe by stomping on it, the whole body is going to be limping for a while. When one member suffers they all suffer.

²⁷*Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.* Each one of you have your place and function.

²⁸*And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.* Now, isn't the order interesting, first, apostles, then prophets, then teachers, then miracles? If we were making out the list, we would probably put miracles at the top.

Then he asks some rhetorical questions. ²⁹*Are all apostles?* No. *Are all prophets?* No. *Are all teachers?* No. *Are all workers of miracles?* No. ³⁰*Do all have gifts of healings?* No. *Do all speak with tongues?* No. *Do all interpret?* No. We have differing gifts but the same Spirit. We have different operations by the same God. We have different administrations but the same Lord. There is the unity and yet the diversity in the unity in the body of Christ.

³¹*But earnestly desire the best gifts.* What are the best gifts? I don't know, it all depends.

I have several saws in my garage. I have a jigsaw. I have a table saw. I have a hacksaw. I have a skill saw, oh yes, you bet. I have a "sawsall". What's the best saw I have? What do you need to cut? Do you want to cut a pipe? You'd better not use my skillsaw. I have the hacksaw for that. Do you want to cut circles in plywood? You can't use my skillsaw. But you can use my jig saw.

It all depends on what your ministry is in the body of Christ, what is your best gift. And so God gives us the places in the body. And then He gives us for that place within the body, and so wherever my place is, I need to covet what would be the best gift in fulfilling that place in the body where God has put me.

So being a pastor/teacher, that's my ministry in the body, the best gifts are word of wisdom, word of knowledge and prophecy. I'm blessed because God has given to me these gifts. But they are the gifts that I need, especially for the place in the body that God has called me.

Now, covet or desire, earnestly the best gifts. The Holy Spirit gives to each man severally as He will. God places us in the body as it pleases Him. But earnestly desire the best gifts. Those gifts that can best equip you for the place in the body where God has called you.

But yet Paul said, *And yet I show you a more excellent way*, a better way than all of the powers of working miracles or all of these other things. I will show you a more excellent way.

Next week we get into that more excellent way, the higher road, the path of love. The thirteenth chapter, one of my favorite chapters of the Bible, next week, as we continue our study through the Scriptures.

Father, thank You for the gifts of Your Holy Spirit. Thank You, Father, for the body of Christ. Oh Lord,

bring us into an awareness of the unity that You desire within Your body, that we, working together in love, might be built up in Christ Jesus. Lord, that we would have that care and concern for one another so that when one part of the body might be hurting, we might also hurt with them. When one is being honored we will all rejoice with them. Lord, may we be truly be a body that is pleasing to You in all things. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.