

**1 Corinthians 12:27: I wanted to come back to this last portion of chapter 12 from last Sunday Evening prior to 1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

(Verses 27-30) is Paul's application of what he taught about the church or body of Christ in the imagery of a human body and its individual members.

Remember from 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, Paul taught us that there are diversities (distinctions) of gifts = the Greek word here is charisma; every member in the body of Christ is NOT going to have the same gift or function, and yet, the same source, (the Spirit of God) empowers every gift in every member of the body, so there will be unity in the body, in the midst of diversity in gifts!

There are differences (distinctions) of administrations = diakonia, or many different ways in which you may SERVE the Lord in His church.

There are diversities (distinctions) of operations = energema, or the ability, and practical use for what God has called you to do for the benefit of the whole body.

The same Spirit, the same Lord, and the same God, makes every individual believer's gift and work profitable for the "WHOLE" body of Christ! (The Local Church)

If you're a member of a Local, Biblical, New Testament Church, (you are not a guest in it), but God has called you to actively serve and to be a participant in His church.

Your activity and work (as a member of the body) might be concealed to the human eyes of others; BUT greatly needed to the body; like the vital internal organs of your human body; you can't see them, but they're operating and working for your life, your health, and the benefit of your WHOLE body. If that one organ becomes sick your whole body suffers:

1 Corinthians 12:26: "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; (with that individual member); or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it"

**1 Corinthians 12:27: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular"**

You, church, are the body of Christ, and individual members in it. Just as you want EVERY member and vital organ of your body to be committed to the strength, health and well-being of your WHOLE BODY, so, if you profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, YOU SHOULD BE committed to the body of Christ, to the local New Testament Church.

If God personally called you in the salvation of your soul, He has also called you (personally) to be committed to His church!

**1 Corinthians 12:28: READ: The Apostles/Prophets were gifts to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Prophets and Apostles: (Cf. Ephesians 4:11)**

Prophets were men who spoke the Word of the LORD infallibly and without error to the people of Israel. They were God's messengers sent to God's people, pointing them to true faith and worship of the One true and living God, and to repent of their wicked ways in those times of their sin, idolatry, wanderings, and straying from their God.

The Apostles were "Extraordinarily Gifted Men", personally called & commissioned by the Lord, they were the first messengers "SENT" to the church after the Lord Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to His throne.

After the Holy Spirit came upon them at Pentecost, they were "Inspired and Infallible" preachers and teachers of God's Word.  
1 John 1:1-3

They were called to lay the foundation (or the foundational teaching) for the NT church, to be witnesses, and to declare and preach the Word given to them by the Spirit of God, and to write and record what God had given them in His Word for every successive generation.

The Word of God given by the Apostles and Prophets was confirmed by God through miracles, signs, and wonders.

**Brethren, all of the gifts identified by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:28, and in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 were for one primary purpose and design, to confirm and certify the truth of apostolic teaching in the NEW NT Church.**

In (Verse 28) after apostles and prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healing, helps (to the apostles and ministry of the church), governments, and then diversity of tongues. (For the purpose of the gospel going into all the world, to EVERY nation, kindred, tribe, and TONGUE or LANGUAGE).

Also (Verses 8-10), (Verses 29-30): ALL have NOT the same gift!

**1 Corinthians 12:31: "But covet (or earnestly desire) the best (or higher) gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way"**

Keep in mind that the Spirit of God SOVEREIGNLY bestows each gift for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. IF that be true, and it is, how do we correlate EARNESTLY DESIRING the best or higher gifts?

1 Corinthians 12:11: But all these (gifts) work (or are empowered) by that "One Spirit of God", He divides (or distributes gifts) to every man (or to every individual) believer as he wills"

From 1 Corinthians 14, we will come to understand that the Corinthians DESIRED the gift of tongues more than any other gift. It was a showy and spectacular gift, but many of those that desired it, (in Corinth) desired it for the wrong reasons.

NOT to diminish the gift of speaking the gospel in foreign languages, BUT note in 1 Corinthians 12:29-30, it is listed last among the gifts that Paul lists.

But isn't this what we see today? I'm full of the Holy Ghost, I can speak with tongues! But you can't tell me ANYTHING about the truth of the gospel of Christ and how I might come to Christ to be saved from my sins!

How about I'm full of the Holy Ghost, let me tell you of the love of Christ! Let me tell you about how God has called me to live a holy life and to constantly turn away from my sins.

But many of the Corinthians believers WANTED the gift of tongues, they wanted that special, showy, and spectacular gift! But in their carnal desire for that gift, and in their thirst for recognition and self-exaltation in the church, they only demonstrated in their hearts that they loved spiritual gifts rather than the Person of Christ who was the bestower of each gift.

Let me just end this section by saying, "the gift" of speaking with other tongues or in foreign languages, was given "to some" in the church by the Spirit of God, in the time of the Apostles, immediately following Pentecost.

This gift, along with all of the other miraculous gifts of that time were "apostolic" and given to the church to confirm and certify the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ; specifically in this time when the foundation of the NT Church was being laid.

Mark 16:20, Acts 2:41-43, 5:11-16, 14:1-3, 2 Corinthians 12:11-12

What is so often seen today "IN CHURCHES" is the glorification of false signs/gifts in one who knows little to nothing of the truth of God's Word; where Christ is NOT exalted, but the sign and false teacher are.

In the last part of (Verse 31), Paul says, "and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way". Let me show you how to throw above and beyond the mark, let me show you an extraordinarily better way in regard to gifts in the church. The context continues 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

So yes, covet the best gifts, but the gift is only effectual when coupled with love which comes from Christ!

**1 Corinthians 13:1: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or as a tinkling symbol"**

Paul taught them: Even if I do possess the gift of speaking in other tongues or foreign languages of peoples from every nation under heaven, MY speaking is worthless without "charity" or the love that comes from Christ.

Further, Paul wrote, if I could speak the language of the angels, (or the highest form of speaking) I am nothing without "charity" or the love that comes from Christ.

There is no doubt in my mind that when Paul spoke of the language of angels, that he was speaking of SPEAKING with beauty and eloquence of speech. Some would use this passage to teach that there is an angelic, heavenly language, spoken by the angels.

Paul spoke in hyperbole here, I believe to make his point, and also in (Verse2), faith to remove mountains. The greatest gifts without the love of Christ are worthless!

I would remind you that every time the angels spoke to earthly humans, they spoke in intelligible languages, understandable to the hearers. (Abraham, Hagar, Jacob, Moses, Manoah and his wife, Mary mother of the Lord, Zechariah, John the Baptist's father).

**Back Paul's main objective and point to the Corinthian Church; what is ANY GIFT without CHARITY or the love of Christ?**

What is speaking, preaching, teaching, or witnessing without love which comes from Christ? Senseless noise because it is NOT being used in love.

THIS was Paul's message to the Church at Corinth was: What is any gift in the Kingdom of Christ when used without love which comes from Christ, or in love to Christ? 1 Corinthians 13:13

So, the "more excellent way" from (12:31); everything that you do for the Kingdom of Christ ought to be done with charity or love.

Specifically, here in (Verse1), the highest form of speaking, (preaching, teaching, witnessing for Christ), if NOT done with love that comes from Christ it becomes senseless.

Don't forget, the Spirit gifts believers even today for the edification and common good of the church body. If the Spirit of God is in you:

Galatians 5:22-26, Ephesians 4:15

If there is anything that I fear for us as a church, it's that we would begin to go through the motions of Christianity in our lives, and in our worship formally and mechanically, and without hearts for Christ or in love to Christ.

We might be "right on" in all of our doctrine, but if there is no love for Christ in us, we will become spiritually senseless, lifeless. When that happens in the church, the Holy Spirit is grieved and quenched, and there is no more power from God in the midst of the church. Revelation 2:1-5

1 Peter 4:8, Colossians 3:12-14

**1 Corinthians 16:14: "Let all your things be done with CHARITY"**

2 Thessalonians 1:3, 1 Timothy 1:5