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## Signs of the Spirit | 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

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- Verses 1-6 included in session 27
- Verse 7 –
  - In Paul's day, there were **manifestation[s] of the Spirit** that were held by **every man**.
    - When the Holy Spirit came upon a believer, it was *visibly expressed*.
    - The manifestations are in addition to the **diversities of gifts... administrations... operations** of verses 4-6. These manifestations are enumerated in verses 8-10.
  - Note that the fact that the Spirit was manifest in visible ways to the Corinthians does not mean that the same is done today, and such a conclusion would be without basis in the text.
- Verses 8-10
  - Paul lists eight *manifestation* gifts that had been given to the believers of Corinth (and presumably all believers of that day). He notes clearly that no believer had all eight, but there was given a distribution of these gifts to **every man** within the body of believers.
    - **The word of wisdom** - The supernatural gift of words (*logos*) to speak in certain situations.
    - **The word of knowledge** - The supernatural gift of knowledge that was not attained through study, but through revelation.
    - The gift of **faith** - The supernatural ability to move forward without fear in the face of uncertain circumstances.
    - **The gifts of healing** - This gift, unlike the others (save **divers kinds of tongues** in v. 10) is plural rather than single. The same are plural in v. 30. These are various supernatural means of healing, such as seen in Matthew 10:8.
    - **The working of miracles** - Miracles are the supernatural cessation of the laws of nature as a means of achieving God's purpose.
    - The gift of **prophecy** - This is the receiving of oracles about the future from God.
    - The gift of **discerning of spirits** - The ability to see invisible powers and principalities at work.
    - **Divers kinds of tongues** - Because there are **kinds of tongues** it appears to be the supernatural ability to speak in other languages.
    - **The interpretation of tongues** - The supernatural ability to interpret another language which the interpreter has not studied.
  - Note that each of these manifestations is supernatural, as would be required for a true manifestation, which is visible by its very nature.
- Verse 11 –
  - As in v. 7, once again it is emphasized that **every man** receives one of **these** manifestations.
  - Charismatic theology is built on the continued requirement of a manifestation for every believer.
    - The Assembly of God believes that manifestations such as speaking in tongues should "be a normative part of every believer's spiritual experience" (<https://ag.org/Beliefs/Topics-Index/Manifestations-of-the-Spirit>).
    - Pentecostal movements have expanded the list of nine manifestations to a multitude of manifestations, such as being slain in the spirit, holy laughter, spontaneous dancing in the spirit, etc.

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## The Members of the Body of Christ | 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

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- Verse 12 – **Christ is one body of many members** in the same manner of the physical body. In this regard, the Corinthian church was forgetting the value of the individual members in verses 21-22, 29, 33. In verses 12-27 the emphasis is on the whole, while in the previous verses the emphasis was on the parts.
- Verses 13-14 - Spirit baptism (being immersed in the Spirit) is what makes us a member of the body of Christ. When we are baptized in the Spirit, we are no longer **one member, but many**. That is, after we are baptized into the Body of Christ, it is the body that is of importance, not the identity of the member.
- Verses 15-24 –
  - These verses form a single illustration of the secondary nature of the various parts of the body for the preeminence of the whole.

- In verse 18, it is unnecessary to take a Calvinistic interpretation of the words **God hat set the members every one of them in the body**.
  - Rather, these words simply say that God has given various roles for the church just as He has done so for the body. It is the function that is ordained, not the individual.
  - The church has a pastor, deacons, various laborers, etc., and each role is ordained of God (as shown in chapter 11).
  - Just like there is no part of the body you want to "do without," there is no part of the church that is unnecessary.
- Verse 25 – The design of the body is such that **there should be no schism** (the word σχίσμα [schisma] is a *tear*, and comes from the root *schizo*). Please note that a *tear* is very different from a *surgery*. Paul had declared in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 to remove one from their membership, so a "unity at all costs" scheme does not align with Pauline doctrine.
- Verse 26 –Rather than the individualistic approach that had been taking place at the Corinthian Agape Feasts, Paul taught a joint suffering and joint rejoicing (i.e.: a communion).
- Verse 27 –
  - There is an important theological distinction displayed in the pronoun **ye**.
    - Since this pronoun is a reference to the Corinthian church, then it is the *local church* that is the body of Christ, not the so-called *universal* or *invisible* church.
    - That is, the Corinthian church was, in and of itself, the Body of Christ.
    - While offensive to modern ecclesiology, is there any other means of interpreting this verse literally? He makes a categorically definite statement that grammatically is limited to the Corinthians alone.
  - If Paul had the a universal church in mind then...
    - ...the pronoun *we* would have been a necessity. Paul was not a sloppy grammarian, and there is a difference between 2nd person plural and third person singular. This difference cannot be discounted or ignored.
    - ...no local church would be complete without its participation in the larger body.
    - ...for participation in the larger body, the local church would need to play a subservient role in that body, thus giving up its autonomy (it would be only a member and must therefore only perform the function of that member).
    - ...the universal church must figure out who is in leadership so that the members (local churches) can serve their roles.

## Order in the Church | 1 Corinthians 12:28-31

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- Verse 28 –
  - Paul declares that God has put in place various functions/roles within the church, and that there is an order of priority in these functions.
    - **First apostles** - Without doubt, apostles were first in authority in the church. Ephesians 2:20 also lists apostles first as foundational in the church.
    - **Secondarily prophets** - This is not, in my opinion, a reference to the Hebrew prophets, but rather to the prophets within the church, as in Acts 13:1-3.
    - **Thirdly teachers** - After the foundation was laid (Eph. 2:20), the role of the teacher became preeminent. This is the most needed function in the church today, since the role of apostle and prophet is now ceased and replaced with the provision of the completed revelation of Scripture.
    - **After that miracles** - the miracle worker was a confirmation kind of work, giving proof that God was doing His *kingdom* work through the church. With the removal of the Kingdom offer, the confirmation work of miracles is no longer needed.
    - **Then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues** - Paul puts these four assistance and administrative gifts in a lower priority (but equal necessity) within the church.
  - Are all of these operational in the church today? Just because **God hat set some in the church** does not mean that God continues to appoint these roles and functions. Historically, God has done so, and this is all that can be definitively concluded from this verse.
- Verses 29-31 - In harmony with his previous words, Paul shows that there are various gifts in the church. In opposition to modern theology about gifts and about calling, Paul encourages the church to **covet earnestly the best gifts**. Literally, we are to *strive for* the best *charismata*. This implies that spiritual gifts can be *learned*.