

The Analytical Method of Bible Study

1 Corinthians 12

CONTEXT

Who: The apostle Paul is writing to believers in Corinth

What: Book is written concerning problems the church in Corinth is facing. They were divided on a number of different issues. Chapter 12-14 deals with what it truly means to be spiritual including the working of spiritual gifts. Chapter 12 is an introduction, description of Spiritual gifts, how they are given and how they are to work within the body.

When: Paul is writing probably about 55 A.D. during his later stay at Ephesus during his second missionary journey. He had already written Galatians & Thessalonians, he would write Romans a year or so later.

Why: Paul was concerned about the divisions and other problems he heard about. He is correcting them.

OBSERVATIONS:

1Cor 12:1 (NASB) Now concerning spiritual [gifts,] brethren, I do not want you to be unaware.

*Transitional phrase - "Now..." introduces 12-14

*spiritual [gifts] is πνευματικον - "spiritualities" or "spiritual things." Spiritual gifts is χαρισμάτων - "grace gifts"

*They had exhibited some ignorance in this area (unaware) and need to be corrected.

2 You know that when you were pagans, [you were] led astray to the dumb idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

*As pagans they followed "dumb" idols. Dumb is τα αφωνα - "the no voice ones"

*"however they were led" - they were not in control of themselves but practiced religious idolatry of some type. Historical study of what they practiced would be helpful to understand Paul's contrasting that with what they should be doing now.

*"Therefore" brings out the contrast between their pagan practices and Christian practices. What they do is evidence of what spirit is controlling them.

*Someone controlled by the Spirit of God can not blaspheme, but will have correct theology concerning Jesus and His position as Lord. The opposite shows control by a spirit other than God.

*A person claiming to speak by God's Spirit, but who in fact blasphemes, is at best deceived about the spirit controlling them.

*The particular illustration of "speaking" is used for a purpose and will be evidenced later in the chapter.

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.

*There are many different gifts. "Varieties" is διαίρισεις - nom. pl.

*The Spirit of the variety of gifts is the same

*gifts is χαρισμάτων - grace gifts

5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord.

*ministries is διακονιων - service, ministry
*The lord of each ministry is the same

6 And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all [persons.]

*effects is ενεργηματων - an effect, a work, an operation
*The same God for all effects
*It is God who works in all things in all people

7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

*each gift, service, effect comes as a manifestation of the Spirit.
*The purpose of each gift, service, effect is for the common good of all.
*each gift, service, effect is something given to the individual, not something produced by the individual.
*manifestation is φανερωσις – something made visible, known - manifested

8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;

*the particular gift, its service and its effect are given by the same Spirit
*word of wisdom comes through the Spirit, so this is not human wisdom, but spiritual - 1 Cor. 1:21-25,30; 2:6f; James 3:13-18
*Word of wisdom is λογος σοφιας
*word of knowledge comes according to the same spirit, so this is not human knowledge - 1 Cor. 2:12-16
*Word of knowledge is λογος γνωσεως

9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,

*faith - πιστις
*gifts of healing - χαρισματα ιαματων - grace gifts (plural) of healings (plural) - comes by one spirit
*gifts of healing can only be understood in a Biblical sense by examining the healings that took place in the NT by Jesus and the apostles. What occurs today must be examined in light of what happened then in order to determine if what is occurring is the same gift.

10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another [various] kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.

*effecting of miracles - ενεργηματα δυναμεων
*prophecy - προφητεια
*distinguishing of spirits - διακρισεις πνευματων
*kinds of tongues - ετερω γενη γλωσσων
*interpretation of tongues - ερμηνεια γλωσσων
*There would have to be a lot of cross referencing and research to determine the meaning of each of the gifts listed and how they manifested themselves during that time. Current supposed manifestations can not determine what they were.
*Why does Paul use - ετερω to set apart kinds of tongues when every other gift is set apart by αλλω?

11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

12 For even as the body is one and [yet] has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not [a part] of the body," it is not for this reason any the less [a part] of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not [a part] of the body," it is not for this reason any the less [a part] of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. 19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

20 But now there are many members, but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; 23 and those [members] of the body, which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our unseemly [members come to] have more abundant seemliness, 24 whereas our seemly [members] have no need [of it.] But God has [so] composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that [member] which lacked,

*the various gifts, ministries and effects are given according to God's will of distribution and not the will or desires of men. Each one of them is a manifestation of the Spirit. No basis in this passage can be found to make speaking in kinds of tongues the manifestation.

*Paul uses the body as an analogy to describe the interworking and importance of each of the various gift, ministries & effects within the church

*Entrance into the church is through the baptism of the Spirit. All true believers are baptized by Him. This passage then is directly against the idea that speaking in tongues is the sign of the baptism of the Spirit and that such baptism is subsequent to salvation - a "second blessing" that comes at a later time.

*Continuation of the analogy, with emphasis on the differences within the body and the need for each one. Each part/gift has its specific role within the body/church.

*There is no basis for "Christian" hermits, etc. who isolate themselves from other believers. Such would be a demonstration of spiritual immaturity, not maturity.

*Vs. 18 - God puts each believer in the body where he wants them. We should not complain or be envious of other people who have different gifts. We should be content where God places us.

*No reason for envy in the church. Every part/gift is important - in fact those that are not usually given much honor are actually more important to the body's health and functioning.

25 that there should be no division in the body, but [that] the members should have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if [one] member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, [various] kinds of tongues. 29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not [workers of] miracles, are they? 30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?

31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.

*Every part of the body is tied in with every other part. We should therefore care for each other with that in view. If one suffers, all suffer. If one is honored, all are honored - i.e. "We all hang together."

*Paul points out again that it is God that appoints who has what gift and how it will be used and its power.

*Paul lists out different gifts. This list differs from those in verses 8-10. This list includes apostles, teachers, helps, and administrations not included earlier. These gifts would have to be also researched to understand exactly what they refer too.

*The rhetorical questions emphasize that not everyone has the same gifts. Again, this destroys the idea that "tongues" could be a universal manifestation of being "Baptized in the Spirit" is common among the Charismatics.

*The grammatical structure here could be taken one of two ways. ζηλουτε δε τα χαρισματα τα μειζονα

1) As translated ζηλουτε is made a present imperative of what the believer should do - earnestly desiring the greater gifts.

2) If ζηλουτε is translated as an present indicative it would be a statement of what the Corinthians were doing - jealously desiring (the more normal definition for translation) what they thought were the greater gifts. *But you are jealously desiring the greater gifts.*

*The transitional statement to chapter 13 makes more sense if this is a statement of fact rather than a command to follow. What "more excellent way" is being contrasted if he is commanding them to desire the greater gifts? Yet there is a great contrast in the love described in chapter 13 compared to the jealousy and division that existed among them and has been pointed out by Paul throughout the book.

Key Thoughts & Summaries

Verse	Key Thoughts	Summary
1	Paul introduced subject of "spiritual things"	
2	When they were pagans the Corinthians were led astray to the dumb idols however they felt	Paul introduces the subject of spiritual things pointing out the Holy Spirit will lead them to a correct understanding of Jesus in contrast to how their idolatry led them astray
3	Those led by the Holy Spirit have a correct theology of Jesus & do not blaspheme	

Key Thoughts

- 4 A variety of gifts, but one Spirit
- 5 A variety of ministries, but one Lord
- 6 A variety of effects/powers but one God
- 7 Every gift of the Spirit given for the common good of all
- 8 Gifts of word of wisdom and word of knowledge
- 9 gift of faith, gifts of healings
- 10 gifts of miracles, prophecy, distinguishing spirits, kinds of tongues and interpretation of tongues
- 11 Each gift given as the Spirit decides
- 12 Analogy of the body - one body has many members that make it up.
- 13 Every true Christian is baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit
- 14 The body is made up of many members
- 15 The foot is a part of the body regardless of what it would rather be.
- 16 The ear is a part of the body regardless of what it would rather be.
- 17 If the body were an eye, it could not hear, and if it were an ear, it would have no smell.
- 18 God has placed the members in the body as He desires.
- 19 If the body was only one part, it would be missing everything else
- 20 There are many members, but only one body
- 21 The eye needs the hand and the head needs the feet.
- 22 The parts of the body that are “weaker” are very necessary.
- 23 These less honorable parts should receive great honor.
- 24 The seemingly members already get honor, so God wants to give honor to the parts that don’t get it.
- 25 There should be no division in the body, but each part should care for the others.
- 26 If one part suffers, all suffer. If one part is honored, all are honored.
- 27 You are Christ’s body, each one a part of it.
- 28 God appointed gifts in the church including: Apostles, Prophets, teachers, miracles, healings, helps, administration and kinds of tongues.
- 29 & 30 No gift is given to everyone
- 31 They wanted the greater gifts, but Paul would show them a better way.

Summary

There are a variety of gifts, ministries and effects given by the Godhead as God desires. Each one mentioned is given for the purpose of the good of everyone.

Every true Christian has been baptized by the Holy Spirit and made part of Christ’s body.

Every part of the body is needed and none can exist without the others for each part needs all the others including the parts that seem more important - they are need of the parts that seem less important.

The body of Christ is one unity so there should be no division for whatever happens to Christian happens to all.

God has given gifts to people as He decided. No gifts is given to all.

1.

They divided because of their quest for the greater gifts, but Paul would show them a better way.

Outline of 1 Corinthians 12

2. Introduction to the Subject of Spiritual Things (Vs. 1-3)
 - a. Transitional statement(1)
 - b. Pointing out their past(2)
 - c. Statement of fact in the present (3)
3. Origin, Purpose and Description of Spiritual Things (Vs. 4-11)
 - a. Origin of Spiritual Gifts, their Ministries & Effects (4-6)
 - i. Gifts from the Spirit (4)
 - ii. Ministries from the Lord (5)
 - iii. Effects/power from God (6)
 - b. Purpose of Spiritual gifts (7)
 - c. Description of Spiritual gifts (8-11)
4. An Analogy of Spiritual Gifts in the Body of Christ (12-31)
 - a. Entrance into the body (12,13)
 - b. The oneness of the body (14-19)
 - c. The need for each member of the body (20-25)
 - d. The unity of the body (26)
 - e. The reality of the analogy (27)
 - f. The gifts in the body (28-30)
5. Transition to Chapter 4 (vs. 31)

Applications

- *I must not hold myself as the pastor as being more important than anyone else in the church
- *I must encourage others to use their gifts and honor them for it - even if it is background ministry
- *I must be humble but firm in standing against the improper teaching and practice concerning “tongues” so widespread in the Christian community now.
- *I must be humble but firm in refuting the erroneous teaching concerning the “baptism of the Holy Spirit” that is espoused by the Charismatics.
- *I must be grateful for the gifts, ministry and ability God has given me and not be jealous of what He has given to other men.

Advanced Analytical Study

1 Corinthians 12 - Pivotal Idea

Vs.	Verbs	Nouns
1.	θελω - I do not want	πνευματικων - spiritual things: αγνοειν - to be unaware
2.	οιδατε - You know; ητε - led; ηγεσθε were led	ηγεσθε pagans; τα ειδωλα τα αφωνα dumb idols
3.	γνωριζω - I make known ουδεις . . . λαλων λεγει - no one speaking says δυναται - is able	αναθεμα ιησους - accursed Jesus κυριος ιησους - Lord Jesus
4.		χαρισματων - gifts
5.		διακονιων - ministries
6.		ενεργηματων - effects
7.	διδοται - is given	η φανερωσις του πνευματος - manifestation of the spirit. συμφερον - common good
8.	διδοται - is given	λογος σοφιας - word of wisdom λογος γνωσεως - word of knowledge
9.		πιστις - faith χαρισματα ιαματων - gifts of healings
10.		ενεργηματα δυναμεων - effecting miracles προφητεια - prophecy διακρισεις πνευματω - distinguishing spirits γενη γλωσσων - various tongues ερμηνεια γλωσσων - interpretation of tongues
11	ενεργει - works βουλεται - he wills	το αυτο πνευμα - the same Spirit
12		body; many members; one body; Christ
13	εβαπτισθημεν - were baptized εποτισθημεν - made to drink	one Spirit; one body
14		body not one member;

15	foot; hand; body
16	ear; eye; body
17	whole body; eye; the hearing; ear; the smelling
18 εθετο - has placed ηθελησεν - he desired	members; body
19	one member; what the body?
20	many members; one body
21 δυναται - able;	eye; hand; need; head; feet
22 δοκουντα - seem to be	members; body; weak; necessary
23 δοκουμεν - seem to be περιτιθεμεν - bestow	body; honorable; unseemly; abundant seemliness
24 συνεκερασεν - composed υστερουμενω - lacked	seemly; body; abundant honor
25 μεριμνωσιν - to care	σχισμα - division; body ; members; one another
26 πασχει - suffers; συμπασχει - suffer; δοξαζεται - is honored; συγχαιρει - rejoices	member; honor
27	Christ's body; individually members
28 εθετο - appointed	first apostles; second prophets; third teachers; miracles, gifts of healings; helps; administrations; kinds of tongues
29	not all: apostles; prophets; teachers; miracle
30	not all: gifts of healings; tongues; interpretation
31 ζηλουτε - you are desiring δεικνυμι - I show	τα χαρισματα τα μειζονα - greater gifts; υπερβολην οδον - better way

Step 6 - Key Thought

The body of Christ is one body with many members with each member being needed for the good of the whole body and with each member being gifted as God desires to serve Him.

Step 7

1 Corinthians 12	“The Nature of the Body of Christ”
Vs 1-3	“Introduction to Spiritual Things”
Vs. 4-11	“Origin, purpose and description of Spiritual Things”
Vs. 12-31	“One Body with many members”

Step 8

Spiritual Things in the Church				
Their Description			Their Workings	
Spiritual Gifts from God			Members Serving God in the Body	
Introduction 1-3	Origin & Purpose 4-7	Description 8-11	Analogy of the Body 12-30	Transition to Ch. 14 31
Do not be ignorant Remember your former practice Correct theology from the Holy Spirit	Gifts from the Spirit Ministries from the Lord Effects/powers from God Each for the good of the whole	word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healings, miracles, prophecy, distinguishing of spirits, kinds of tongues, interpreting tongues	Entrance into the Body (12,13) The oneness of the body (14-19) The need of every member (20-25) The unity of the body (26) Christ (27-30)	You are seeking the greater gifts, but I will show you a better way. . .

ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα. Καὶ ἔτι καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν ὑμῖν δείκνυμι.

1) Earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a more excellent way

2) but you are coveting the greater gifts, but I show a more excellent way

ζηλόω το ηάε ξεαλ φορ, το δεσιρε εαρνεστλψ το βε ενίους, εαλουσ το χόετ

Πρεσεντ Αχτίε Ινδιχατίε		Πρεσεντ Αχτίε Ιμπερατίε	
Σινγυλαρ	Πλυραλ	Σινγυλαρ	Πλυραλ
1 st ζηλῶ	ζηλομεν	ζηλοῦ	ζηλοῦτε
2 nd ζηλοῦς	ζηλοῦτε	ζηλουτω	ζηλουτωσαν
3 rd ληλοῖ	ζηλουσι		