

## The Book of 1 Corinthians

### 1 Corinthians 12:1-3

#### **Session 46: Introduction to the Spiritual Gifts, part 1**

The part of 1 Corinthians that deals with the reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness (RCI) of godly labor is chapters 12:1-14:40.

Today we start Paul's RCI with regard to the spiritual gifts and the operations of God.

Reproof: 1 Corinthians 12:1-3

Correction: 1 Corinthians 12:4-13:13

Instruction in Righteousness: 1 Corinthians 14:1-40

**1 Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.**

Paul is saying that he does not want the Corinthians (and by extension, the body of Christ) to be ignorant of the spiritual gifts. What does it mean to be ignorant?

Oxford English Dictionary (OED): ignorant

Lacking knowledge or awareness, uninformed, uneducated

Paul is not insulting anyone. Ignorance does not mean you aren't smart, it means there is something you don't know, and Paul wants us to know about the spiritual gifts. But Paul isn't just saying that he wants us to know some things.

By saying it this way, Paul is actually warning us that we cannot afford to be ignorant. Why? Because this is one of those doctrines which Satan loves to utilize to deceive believers and get them off into false doctrine.

In Paul's epistles, he uses this phrase of not being ignorant at least six different times, describing a different doctrinal subject. As it turns out, these doctrines are especially useful to Satan's policy of evil (PoE) to confuse believers living in the dispensation of the grace of God (DoGG), to keep them in the dark about certain doctrinal truths for the purpose of hindering their edification.

1 Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. <sup>2</sup> Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. <sup>3</sup> Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and *that* no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

Verses 2-3 finishes up Paul's reproof. And what is that reproof? That the very thing that was going on with the Corinthians when they were idol worshippers is going on in their assemblies now that they are believers in Jesus. And what is that "thing?" It is a counterfeit action that Satan himself is orchestrating.

What was the counterfeit of the past? It was Satan convincing the worshippers of idols and false gods that a "dumb idol" was somehow speaking to the priests of that religion; that the gods were communicating through the idol. They totally believed what they were told and Paul describes their deceived status by saying they were "carried away unto these dumb idols." In other words, they had been deceived in the past by spiritual phenomena and they were totally unaware of it. They thought they were serving the real "God."

Because of their ignorance, they were deceived before, and because of their present ignorance, they are being deceived again. Satan has his PoE working in the Corinthian church, and they don't even know it.

In their church, there was a man claiming to speak by the Spirit of God, and they believed that was what he was doing. Because they were ignorant, they were also gullible. They never realized the message coming from this man was totally false because they were observing the spiritual phenomena.

What do we mean by "spiritual phenomena?" We are talking about signs, wonders and miracles; outward supernatural expressions, which gave credence to what was being said.

We need to take some time to study these spiritual phenomena, but as we do, it is important that we all recognize we are presently living in the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to us Gentiles. After temporarily interrupting His

prophetic program with Israel, God raised up the apostle Paul, and revealed to him the mystery of Christ.

Once this DoGG ends with the event of the Blessed Hope (BH), God will resume His program with Israel to fulfill those things which God has declared He will do in that program. If these things are not already in your understanding, you need them to be for we will draw conclusions from this information.

In connection with these two programs, and the scriptures which relate to them (Genesis – Revelation, minus Paul’s 13 epistles) we notice that the vast majority of signs, wonders and miracles take place in Israel’s prophetic program. If you count them up, between 98 and 99 percent of all the references to supernatural occurrences are in Israel’s program.

We have a few references to the spiritual phenomena of signs, wonders and miracles in Paul’s epistles, such as here in 1 Corinthians 12. Of all the references to supernatural phenomena in the Bible, less than 2% of them are in the dispensation of grace (DoG), and even then, the majority of those references are about Satan’s counterfeits. Only a few of the references are to God’s genuine use of spiritual phenomena.

We will see why that is the case as we work through our study, but let me give you the “gist” of it: God’s use of spiritual phenomena in this DoG is limited to a very short period of time and for the accomplishment of a very particular purpose. Once that purpose was fulfilled, God was no longer uses signs, wonders and miracles in this Dispensation of Grace.

Even after the genuine miracles ceased, Satan continued to counterfeit those spiritual phenomena. That is why most of Paul’s references are to counterfeits and not the genuine.

Let’s go back to the issue of the vast majority of supernatural phenomena taking place in God’s program with Israel. Did you know that God made a covenant with Israel to do signs, wonders and miracles?

After the tables of stone with the 10 commandments, after the golden calf incident, Moses prays for the Lord to be merciful to the people of Israel and take them for His inheritance. Here is how God responds:

Exodus 34:10 And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will **do marvels**, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou *art* shall **see the work of the LORD**: for it *is* a terrible thing that I will do with thee.

Notice those two bolded parts of the verse: “marvels” and “the work of the Lord.” God made a covenant to do “marvels.” He made a covenant with Israel that they should see things which indicate that God is doing something with them. This is a covenant to do supernatural things, miraculous things. And even that turns out to be a “sign” unto them, for if Israel doesn’t see her “signs,” if she doesn’t see God’s “wonders,” then that is a sign that there is something wrong between God and His people, Israel. For Israel, signs and wonders were the natural thing for them to expect.

This is why Paul says what he does in 1 Corinthians 1:22.

1 Corinthians 1:22 For **the Jews require a sign**, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

The Jews don’t just want to see a sign, they “require” a sign, and so they should; based on the covenant of Exodus 34. What am I saying to you right now? I am saying that if we are ignorant of the fact that signs naturally belong to Israel then Satan will take advantage of that ignorance to deceive believers today by having them follow counterfeit spiritual phenomena during this dispensation of grace. Remember two things: 1) The covenant was with Israel, not to the world, and 2) the program which contains that covenant is on hold during this dispensation of the grace of God. This is one of the reasons why knowing how to rightly divide the word is so important.

Turn to Joel 2. Joel is talking about things which will be taking place in the last days of God’s program with Israel. Specifically, Joel is talking about some supernatural phenomena which would be taking place at that time.

Joel 2:28 And it shall come to pass afterward, *that* I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: <sup>29</sup> And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. <sup>30</sup> And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. <sup>31</sup> The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. <sup>32</sup> And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

The “time” which Joel refers to took place in Acts 2. Peter knows this and he even quotes this passage on the day of Pentecost. So, what is happening in Acts 2 is a prophesied event. As we get ready to read about it in Acts, just notice that the people who are being supernaturally “gifted” in Joel 2:28 are Israelites.

Joel 2:28 And it shall come to pass afterward, *that* I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

The Spirit does get poured out on “all flesh.” At that time, if you are Israel’s flesh, you are gifted to prophesy, dream dreams and see visions. From verse 28 through the rest of the chapter, (verse 32) Joel talks about what happens to Israel’s flesh; to Israel’s sons and daughters when the Spirit is poured out.

But, not everyone is Israel’s flesh. For those who are not Israelites, when the Spirit is poured out, they get something else, and that is the subject of chapter 3. If you are not Israel’s flesh, what are you? You are a Gentile.

Joel 3:2 I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.

## The Book of 1 Corinthians

### 1 Corinthians 12:1-6

#### Session 47: Introduction to the Spiritual Gifts, part 2

Do you see the distinction? “All nations” as opposed to “my people” and “my heritage Israel.”

Joel 3:9 Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: <sup>10</sup> Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. <sup>11</sup> Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD. <sup>12</sup> Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. <sup>13</sup> Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. <sup>14</sup> Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. <sup>15</sup> The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. <sup>16</sup> The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

When God pours out His Spirit upon all flesh, Israel gets these supernatural gifts, and the Gentiles get the great and terrible day of the Lord at Armageddon!

Acts 2:14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: 15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day. <sup>16</sup> But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; <sup>17</sup> And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: **and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:** <sup>18</sup> And on **my servants and on my handmaidens** I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall

prophesy: <sup>19</sup> And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: <sup>20</sup> The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

We will pick back up on this a little later, but the point I want to make right now is that these things belong to Israel in particular.

Now, turn to Isaiah 2.

Isaiah 2:2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. <sup>3</sup> And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for **out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.**

In the kingdom, when the word of the Lord goes out from Jerusalem, it goes to the Gentiles. In response, the Gentiles will say “let’s go up to the house of the Lord and He will teach us.”

The same thing is repeated in Micah 4.

Micah 4:1 But in the last days it shall come to pass, *that* the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. <sup>2</sup> And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for **the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.**

Now I want us to look at another reference in Zechariah 8. The context is again, when that day of the Lord is finished and the kingdom of heaven has been established on the earth.

Zechariah 8:20 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; *It shall yet come to pass*, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: <sup>21</sup> And the inhabitants of one *city* shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also. <sup>22</sup> Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. <sup>23</sup> Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days *it shall come to pass*, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard *that* God *is* with you.

So, what is happening here? In the kingdom, the Jew is going to go to all the nations of the world and carry the word of the Lord to them. To do so, they must be able to communicate with every nation and tongue on the earth. So, they will be given the supernatural gift of tongues, which is not the ability to speak in every language, but the ability to be understood in every language. Did you get that?

Those Jews will tell those Gentile people, that God is with them (the Jews), and they will declare the Immanuel issue (that God is with us-the Jews) to those Gentiles. And just like on the day of Pentecost, when the Gentiles hear those Jews talking in Hebrew, they won't hear Hebrew, they will hear what is being said in their own language. That is the supernatural gift of tongues. And if a group of people in which there are multiple languages understood are listening to the Jew with the gift of tongues, then they will all hear in their own language.

Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. <sup>5</sup> And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup> Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that **every man heard them speak in his own language.** <sup>7</sup> And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? <sup>8</sup> And **how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?** <sup>9</sup> Parthians, and Medes,

and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,<sup>10</sup> Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,<sup>11</sup> Cretes and Arabians, **we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.**

Not only does the gift of tongues allow the Jew to speak and be understood in any language, but he can also understand what is being said to him in any language, even if he doesn't already know it. Why? Because the gift of interpretation of tongues goes hand in hand with the gift of tongues.

What am I after in all of this? For now, I want us to understand that there is a single gift, that was a special provision, a special supernatural gift for Israel in their program, especially when the kingdom was being preached to be "at hand," and that gift was the gift of tongues. In all the references we have looked at so far, this gift is in view, even when it wasn't mentioned by name.

Acts 2:14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: <sup>15</sup> For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day. <sup>16</sup> But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; <sup>17</sup> And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

The Spirit is beginning to be poured out upon all flesh, but the ones who benefit from the "gifting" of it are the members of the believing remnant (BR) of Israel. Something to understand about the effects of the Spirit being poured out upon all flesh is that everything does not happen in a moment. The first effects are on Israelites and even that is progressive. The second effects, on the Gentiles, follow the effects on Israel. They don't happen simultaneously.

We have already looked at Joel 3 and what happens when the Spirit is poured out on Gentile flesh, so we won't look at it again, but this is the same issue Jesus spoke of in John 16.

John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. <sup>8</sup> And **when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:** <sup>9</sup> Of sin, because they believe not on me; <sup>10</sup> Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; <sup>11</sup> Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

This is the result of the Spirit being poured out on non-Jewish flesh, which is detailed in Joel 3. The result of the Spirit being poured out on Jewish flesh is detailed in Joel 2. This is what Peter is focused on in Acts 2. The Spirit's ministry to the rest of the world, in connection with Joel 3, doesn't take place until the day of the Lord's wrath begins. But previous to that:

Acts 2:17 ...and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: <sup>18</sup> And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

Not the nation of Israel at large, but the members of the believing remnant (BR) of Israel will prophesy. The last days don't end at Pentecost, therefore the signs, wonders and miracles continue on (in Israel's program) unto the great and terrible day of the Lord and the kingdom gets established. But notice that all the signs being performed belong to Israel.

Satan works to keep this from being known and appreciated, for this is key to keeping people ignorant of the spiritual gifts. When we rightly divide the word (RDW) we understand the naturalness of the supernatural in connection with God's prophetic program with Israel. And if you understand the programs and the distinction between the prophetic program and the mystery, and what God is doing today in the DoGG, then you also understand that the supernatural signs, wonders and miracles do not naturally fit into the DoGG. Combine that with the understanding that we are not part of Israel's program, and now you are beginning to get the doctrinal picture.

Take a look at what Paul says about the dispensation of the grace of God (DoGG).

2 Corinthians 5:7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

When we get over to 2 Corinthians, we will see Paul talk about this issue and why walking by faith is better and why God is doing things the way He is. But my point is that what is happening in this DoGG stands in stark contrast to things in Israel's program.

What are we doing right now? We are giving you some fundamental things about the supernatural phenomena taking place in Israel's program which come from knowing about the rightly dividing of God's word, and about the two programs which God has (prophecy and mystery).

Now turn to Acts 10 where we have a Gentile, Cornelius, getting the gift of tongues. The Lord tells Peter to go see this Gentile and he reluctantly does. Peter starts talking about the Lord's death on the cross and the commission they have to preach Jesus as the Judge of the quick and dead.

Acts 10:39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: <sup>40</sup> Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; <sup>41</sup> Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even to us*, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. <sup>43</sup> To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

As soon as Peter says the things in verse 43, something happens.

Acts 10:44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. <sup>45</sup> And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. <sup>46</sup> For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.

Why were the circumcision astonished when they heard the Gentiles speak with tongues? Because that gift had only been given to Israel. Joel said, "your sons

and your daughters" would have the supernatural gifts. In fact, tongues was the gift the Jews were supposed to use on the Gentiles, not the other way around.

So, we understand two things: 1) signs, wonders and miracles naturally belonged to Israel, and 2) for a limited time, at the beginning of the DoGG, Gentiles were given spiritual gifts.

Peter and those with him were not only astonished at the fact that the Spirit was poured out on these Gentiles, but he is also astonished because no water baptism took place. Because he doesn't know any differently, he goes ahead and baptizes the Gentiles, but he knows something isn't right. Why? Because in his program, the Spirit followed the baptism!

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

How could they speak in tongues without the Spirit? They couldn't. So, in Acts 10, Peter knew they had received the Spirit because he heard them speak with tongues. So he figures, "I know this is all out of order and I don't understand it, but I think I need to baptize them because that is the prescription I have always known."

In Acts 11, Peter recounts the occasion with Cornelius.

Acts 11:15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.<sup>16</sup> Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. <sup>17</sup> Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as *he did* unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

In other words, I knew something was off, but I know God was the one who was doing this (giving tongues to Gentiles) so who was I to withstand what God was doing?

There was one gift which was special to Israel in their future program (tongues) in the kingdom, and that was the gift that God gave to the Gentiles at the start of the dispensation of grace (DoG). The question is, "why?"

Now, back to 1 Corinthians 12.

As we get ready to start, let me remind us of the three categories of ignorance that Satan is counting on: 1) ignorance of right division, 2) ignorance of the two programs, and 3) ignorance that Satan can counterfeit the power of God with his own spiritual gifts.

And without the instruction of 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14, no one would be able to tell the difference between the genuine and the counterfeit. People sometimes ask if Satan has the power to produce signs, wonders and miracles. He does possess that power. To tell the difference, we will need to be instructed in sound doctrine so that we are not victimized by seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.

1 Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. <sup>2</sup> Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. <sup>3</sup> Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and *that* no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.