

First Corinthians 12

Paul has been dealing with church worship issues or issues that rise at church meetings since Ch. 8:

1. Food sacrificed to idols (a pagan worship practice carried over)
2. Head coverings regulations for men and women when praying and prophesying
3. The Lord's Supper
4. Now, Paul addresses spiritual gifts and manifestations of those spiritual gifts in a church setting.

Spiritual gifts must have been one of the issues the Corinthians wrote Paul about.

But, Paul expands on their question and deals with the issue in the Corinthian church, which is, the abuse of tongues.

At the heart of this letter is the issue of what is really "spiritual".

The Corinthians have had to be corrected on their definition of "spiritual" in these areas:

1. Wisdom (ch. 1 and 2) –
 - a. Corinth accepted worldly wisdom and mere rhetoric
 - b. Paul said it was understanding the revelation of God
2. Power (ch. 1) –
 - a. Corinth saw power as worldly leadership and stage presentation
 - b. Paul said it was the cross and the gospel which proclaims the power of the cross.
3. Leadership (ch. 3) –
 - a. Corinth sought large crowds with followers
 - b. Paul said spiritual leadership was servants empowering believers.
4. Wealth (ch. 4) –
 - a. Corinthians were living as kings with dominion in this age which included their right to have all they wanted
 - b. Paul said spiritual wealth was using this life to serve people and advance the still coming kingdom of God
5. Morality (ch. 5, 6, 8 immoral brother, prostitutes in temple, cultic meals) –
 - a. Corinthians were so spiritual that physical behavior had no effect on their spiritual condition
 - b. Paul taught that lifestyle is a direct reflection of your spiritual condition.
6. Lawsuits (ch. 6) –
 - a. The Corinthians showed they were so spiritually powerless that they could not even resolve simple issues of this age by going to the Pagan world for legal settlements between each other.
 - b. Yet Paul says, they are the spiritual people who will judge spiritually superior angels in the future
7. Sexuality in Marriage (ch. 7) –
 - a. The Corinthians were so spiritual their spiritual women did not want to be defiled by mundane earthly matters such as sexual relations in marriage
 - b. Paul said this is part of God's plan for his spiritual people.
8. Rights and Privileges (ch. 8 and 9)
 - a. The Corinthians had spiritual rights to do anything they wanted including sinful, carnal and immoral behavior.
 - b. Paul said the spiritual person does not use some rights and privileges because of a higher spiritual responsibility.
9. Bread and the Cup (ch. 10)
 - a. The Corinthians were the people of God and thus spiritually immune to God's judgment because they had eaten the "magic" bread and drank the "spiritual" wine at the Lord's Supper.

- b. Paul said Israel was baptized and enter God's plan at the Red Sea, ate the spiritual food called manna and drank water from the spiritual rock that was Christ yet they were scattered like debris from a hurricane in the wilderness by the judgment of God.

10. Spiritual Gifts

- a. The Corinthians misunderstand the source and purpose of spiritual gifts because they misunderstand everything that is spiritual
- b. Paul is going to instruct them and relieve them of the ignorance concerning spiritual gifts.

11. Physical resurrection

- a. The Corinthians reject the concept that the physical body will rise from the grave.
- b. Paul explains that is what happened to Jesus and it is the eventual end of every believer. The physical body will be resurrected as a spiritual body.

Paul did not see life in the spirit as a life lived removed from the present.

- Instead Paul life in the spirit as a life lived in the weakness of the flesh while simultaneously living in the power of the spirit.
- Our live here is directly connected and empowered by our life in the future.
- Our life in the future has already begun even before our life here has ended.

Corinth is a young church that has come out of pagan worship and not Judaism. In antiquity it was understood that special people were in touch with the divine power(s) and had special spiritual abilities. This made a person unique and they were marked as a "spiritual" person. Yet, that person may not be virtuous, righteous and good.

Rivalries are a problem in this church:

1. Rivalries between followers of Peter, Paul, Apollos and Christ.
2. Rivalries between members involving law suits.
3. Rivalries between married and not married.
4. Rivalries between husbands and their overly spiritual wives.
5. Rivalries between men and women concerning who covers their head
6. Rivalries between the wealthy and the lower class at the Lord's Supper.
7. Now, in chapter 12, rivalries among those with certain spiritual gifts.

These passages of scripture are difficult because:

1. Our ignorance of these events and the extent of their manifestations.
2. Our lack of similar verses addressed to other churches.

Chrysostom (born in 347 in Antioch, Syria) said even in his day there was so much ignorance concerning these verse that he himself was perplexed.

It seems clear that there were supernatural manifestations occurring among the Corinthians. Many of the members of the church found themselves in possession of exceptional spiritual gifts.

The problem for them was:

1. These gifts did not make the possessor more mature, more spiritual or more moral.
2. To the young, immature believers in Corinth the gifts became a source of competition, showmanship and rivalries that harmed the church.
3. The Corinthians were familiar with pagan spiritual manifestations that included incantations, spiritual speaking and demonic manifestations.
4. Certain gifts were sought after because they brought attention to the person using the gift and individuals then became proud and arrogant.

Everybody has a gift, but not everybody is living holy, virtuous or Christ-like.

God never judged a city or an individual for not producing miracles or manifesting spiritual gifts, but he did destroy them for wickedness and evil. And, believers are rebuked for not producing the fruit of the spirit and righteousness in their lives.

12:1

Περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν, ἀδελφοί, οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν.
Now about the spiritual matters brothers I do not wish you to be ignorant

These first three verses are important because they set the direction for the next three chapters. Many times these three verses are skipped and study of the gifts begins in 12:4. The problem with skipping these verses is that we may miss Paul's attitude and purpose for writing and saying what he does.

"Now about" as in 7:1 and 8:1 probably refers to topics from their letter. "Now about" introduces a new topic.

The issue here concerns the proper identification of "who is the spiritual man." Chapter 13 reveals this.

πνευματικῶν (*pneumatikon*) could be translated as masculine ("spiritual ones") or neuter ("spiritual things"). The word "gifts" is not in the Greek, but is added for clarity. But, the addition of "gifts" may distract from the fact that Paul is talking about, "What is a "spiritual man" and is explaining that spiritual manifestations through the man does not prove the man is "spiritual" or mature/approved.

Support for "spiritual men" ("spiritual ones" or "spiritual people") comes from:

- 1 Cor. 2:15 – "The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment."
- 1 Cor. 3:1 – "Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly – mere infants in Christ."
- 1 Cor. 14:37 – "If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command. If he ignores this, he himself will be ignored."

πνευματικῶς (*pneumatikos*) is used as an adjective 15 times in First Corinthians. Paul uses the same word only 9 other times in all of his letters combined (and, never more than 3x in any one letter).

If Paul is talking about spiritual gifts he will use the word charisma as he does in 12:4 and 12:9 and several other places.

"brothers" indicates Paul is seeking unity and is still recognizing that they are in the Lord.

"I do not wish you to be ignorant" is a formula for information that must not be understood if one is to properly understand Paul. Also:

- Romans 1:13 – a harvest
- 11:25 - Israel
- 2 Cor. 1:8 – hardships
- 1 Thes. 4:13 – the dead in Christ and end times

Paul's compassion for his "brothers" does not allow him to leave them ignorant concerning this issue.

12:2

οἶδατε ὅτι ὅτε ἔθνη ἦτε πρὸς τὰ εἰδῶλα τὰ ἄφωνα ὥς
You know that when nations you were to the idols voiceless however
ἂν ἦγεσθε ἀπαγόμενοι.
You were led being led away

This verse is not complete or correct grammatically in the Greek.

“led astray” is a verb used to refer to the leading away of a prisoner or a condemned criminal as in Mark 14:44 and Mark 15:16.

“Dumb idols” indicates that are totally mute and cannot even answer or speak, let alone intervene in the lives of their worshippers. Hab. 2:18-19:

“Of what value is an idol, since a man has carved it? Or an image that teaches lies? For he who makes it trusts in his own creation; he makes idols that cannot speak. Woe to him who says to wood, ‘Come to life!’ Or to lifeless stone, ‘Wake up!’ Can it give guidance? It is covered with gold and silver; there is no breath in it. But the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him.” – Habakkuk 2:18-20

“being led away” (apagomenoi) emphasizes the thoughtless following of these worthless idols because the people knew nothing better or different. They were led by local customs and pagan priests, but not by divine revelation or will.

Paul begins his teaching with something they are familiar with, Pagan worship.

1. Paul may be reminding them of their complete lack of experience with actual spiritual speech since idols could not even talk or communicate. This comes from his Jewish background that complete scorned idols.
2. Paul may be making a contrast to previous demonic manifestations which included ecstatic experiences and inspired utterances. This comes from the fact that Paul knows that idols are backed by demon powers.

The idols were mute but demon spirits still spoke through these idols when the demon spirit would manifest in a worshipper.

“*The sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God.*” (1 Cor. 10:20)

So, the stone or metal idol was mute but the demon still led people through manifestations.

12:3

διὸ γνωρίζω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς ἐν πνεύματι
therefore I make known to you that no one by the spirit

θεοῦ λαλῶν λέγει ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς καὶ οὐδεὶς
of God speaking says a curse (is) Jesus and no one

δύναται εἰπεῖν κύριος Ἰησοῦς εἰ μὴ ἐν
can to say Lord Jesus except by

πνεύματι ἁγίῳ
the spirit holy

“Therefore” - Paul brings his opening argument to a close

“I make known to you” is Paul way of solving their ignorance. Paul is going to give them insight/Truth.

Pagan worship will renounce Jesus and all his Lordship stands for.

Spiritual worship will support Jesus Lordship and the character of that kingdom.

Since demons can speak through mute idols not every spiritual utterance is Christian or from the Holy Spirit.

“**Therefore I tell you**” is “διο γνωριζω υμιν” or “Therefore I make known to you”. This must be a response to verse 1 or the information that Paul wants to supply when he says in verse 1 “I do not wish you to be ignorant.”

This actually comes across as corrective information to offset their preconceived ideas concerning spiritual things of the pagan world.

Verses 1-3 then could be understood as saying:

“Because I do not want you ignorant about spiritual manifestations (12:1) and because you already have experience with demon spirits (12:2), I am going to correct your thinking by first telling you that manifestations of the Holy Spirit have a different focus than the manifestations of demon spirits (12:3). Then I am going to tell you how and why the Holy Spirit manifests among the believers (12:4-end of the section).”

αναθεμα ιησους or “A curse is Jesus”

What is Paul referring to when he refers to “Jesus be cursed” and “Jesus is Lord”:

Option One: Someone in a church service spoke under the influence of a spirit of a demon or the Spirit of God and said these things. Problems with this include:

- a. Why is Paul not more aggressive in speaking out against someone in the church service saying “Jesus be cursed”.
- b. What kind of circumstances in church would have led to, allowed and accepted a spiritual utterance of “Jesus be cursed” to be spoken. It is hard to imagine any.
- c. It is hard to imagine Paul having to instruct a Christian group that saying “Jesus be cursed” is not good

Option Two: Someone in a pagan service had said or heard something like this being said by means of ecstatic utterances. In verse 2 Paul mentioned the experiences the Corinthians had when they worshipped idols and demons. This is where the Corinthians had seen spiritual manifestations and heard spiritual utterances but not from the Holy Spirit. The point here would be developed later concerning tongues. Paul would be saying an ecstatic utterance such as tongues is no proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit since ecstatic utterances similar to tongues occurred in the Pagan temples. What matters is if the ecstatic utterance glorified Jesus and recognized his Lordship.

Option Three: Paul is using a hypothetical illustration to point out the vast difference of intent between a demon spirit and the Holy Spirit. Both can manifest ecstatic utterances like tongues or prophecy but they have different intents, messages, attitude and lords just like they originate from two different kingdoms. So the reason Paul uses “Jesus be cursed” and “Jesus is Lord” is not as a test of the spirit’s (the content of the ecstatic utterance is to be tested in 1 Co. 14:29) but to establish the fact that an ecstatic utterance or inspired speech (prophecy, tongues, spiritual songs, even a sermon) is not necessarily from God.

Option Four: In times of persecution Christians were commanded to curse Christ to escape punishment.

Option Five: Bad teaching and false application coming from Paul's reference to Christ becoming "a curse for us" in Galatians 3:13. This distortion had surfaced in someone's ecstatic utterance.

Option Six: Curses were part of the Corinthian pagan religious culture. A god could be used to curse an opponent. Notes/inscriptions would be left in a god's temple asking for assistance by sending a curse. Some of these requests for curses have been found (common on lead tablets. From the sanctuary of Demeter in Corinth comes this:

"Hermes of the underworld grant heavy curses."

It is highly possible that some of the Corinthians were using their new God, Jesus, to curse their opponents. Instead, Paul says the spirit would lead people to speak of Jesus as Lord, not as a tool for selfish benefit, personal gain and defeat of opposition. But, do note that in 1 Corinthians 16:22, Paul himself states:

"If anyone does not love the Lord – a curse be on him. Come, O Lord!"

The Corinthians may have heard "Jesus is cursed" spoken in their pagan temples or Jewish synagogues, but Paul is probably using these statements as illustrations of potential content of inspired speech.

The main point is: Inspired speech or ecstatic utterances are no proof in themselves that the Spirit of God is present or manifesting.

Verse 3 is not a formula for testing the spirits since it is easy for a non-believer to say "Jesus is Lord" if there is some benefit or motivation for saying it. Even demons will say of Paul and his message, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved" as was the case in Philippi in Acts 16:17.

Verse 3 instead is establishing the fact that an ecstatic utterance is not in itself necessarily from God. There are two kingdoms at battle and two kingdoms giving ecstatic utterances. Paul then explains the nature and attitude of the Holy Spirit's manifestations beginning in 12:4 through 14:40. Paul ends this discussion in 14:37 saying,

*"If anybody thinks he is a prophet or **spiritually gifted** (πνευματικός), let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command." - 1 Corinthians 1:37*

The phrase "spiritually gifted" is πνευματικός which is the same word as 1 Cor. 12:1 where it says:

"Now about spiritual matters" (or "spiritual gifts" or "spiritual manifestations")

"Spiritual matters" is the word πνευματικῶν

12:1 says πνευματικῶν (Genitive Plural Neuter) The genitive shows possession. The plural refers to the several things or gifts that are spiritual manifestations. The neuter form refers to spiritual things or in this case manifestations or gifts.

14:37 says πνευματικός (Nominative Singular Masculine) The nominative shows the noun as the subject of the verb. The singular refers to the one person Paul is referring to. The masculine refers to spiritual people.

	In Other Words Paul is saying. . .
12:1	“Now about what is spiritual and what is carnal or what is from the Holy Spirit and what is demonic.”
12:2	“you yourselves have heard inspired speech by demons or saw supernatural manifestations in pagan temples so there isn’t really anything too ‘spiritual’ or ‘Holy’ about an utterance.”
12:3	“the difference is in the content, purpose and attitude of the utterance. Only the Holy Spirit can produce the spiritual that we are looking for.”
12:4	Paul begins to describe the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where, • who, • what, • why • when of the spiritual that comes from the Holy Spirit. This goes on until chapter 14.
14:37	Paul says if you are one of the “spiritual people” who is showing the “Holy Spirit’s spiritual manifestations” then you will agree with what I have written. If you do not then your utterances, gifts or manifestations are demonic and carnal.

Spiritual manifestations and spiritual people who are inspired by the Holy Spirit will say things and do things that exalt, point to, promote and indicate that Jesus is Lord.

The statement “Jesus is Lord” can be broken down as:

1. “Jesus” – Jesus is the man from Nazareth
2. “is” – means he is existing or a reference to his resurrection
3. “Lord” – is recognition of deity and sovereign rulership in heaven and in the universe.

These ideas combined are saying: “The man Jesus has been rejected, crucified and resurrected from the dead as the absolute God and ruler of heaven and earth.

Spiritual gifts that lead away from this doctrinal proclamation are becoming carnal and demonic. The opposite is to be proclaiming “Jesus is cursed”.

The statement “Jesus is cursed” can be broken down as:

1. “Jesus” – is a man
2. “is” – existing as
3. “curse” – “anathema” refers to something that is set apart for a deity and is abandoned by the gods. “Anathema” is the Greek word used to translate and express the Hebrew word “herem” which refers to a thing devoted to God for destruction and burning like Jericho or Achan after he sinned.

These meanings combined say: “The man Jesus died on the cross cursed and abandoned by the gods or by God.”

This would have been something that may have been said in pagan temples in Corinth and it is not unlikely that it was said in Jewish synagogues. It is possible that these words were even uttered by the Paul himself when he persecuted the church and tried to stop the faction of Jews who worshipped Jesus as Lord.

NOTICE that as we begin this section, Paul’s focus is on the inspired speech of demons and the Holy Spirit.

12:4-11 – An Overview

It becomes clear that the first problem Paul is going to address is the lack of diversity of the types of manifestations or gifts that appear in the Corinthian church.

Examples of Paul's stress on diversity:

- 12:4 – “different kinds of gifts”
- 12:5 – “different kinds of service”
- 12:6 – “different kinds of workings”
- 12:7 – “to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given”
- 12:8-10 – lists nine different gifts of the Spirit
- 12:11 – “all these are the work of one and the same Spirit”
- 12:12-27 – the church is compared to a body with different parts with statements like:
 - 12:12 – unit with many parts
 - 12:14 – not one part but many
 - 12:15-18 – parts can't compete and separate
 - 12:19-20 – diversity of parts produces one unified body
 - 12:21 – one part can't say “I don't need this other part”
 - 12:25 – diversity without division
 - 12:28-30 – another list of the gifts focusing on diversity of gifts and also the inability of an isolated gift without the others.

The diversity in the body of Christ originates in the diversity in God himself. Even the trinity itself is a union described as “one” (Dt. 6:4-9 – the great shema) but the three are different persons with different roles.

These are the two things necessary for efficiency then:

1. Unity
2. Diversity

Anything less than the above would be a monster as Paul refers to latter in chapter 12:17:

“If the whole body were an eye!??” or
“If the whole body were an ear!!!???”

Diversity with unity is necessary.

The problem comes if:

1. You are so diverse that you do not function with the body.
2. You are so unified that there is no variation

We can assume that the Corinthians were violating both of these principles as has been seen already in this book:

- 1) They are so diverse that they are out of step with the apostolic doctrine and practice:
 - a. “If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice – nor do the churches of God.” (11:16)
 - b. “This is the rule I lay down in all the churches.” (7:17)
 - c. “He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.” (4:17)
 - d. “As in all the congregations of the saints.” (14:33)
 - e. “Did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only people it has reached?” (14:36)
 - f. Numerous other examples including their understanding of wisdom, power, freedom, rights, morality, marriage, the Lord's Supper, eschatology.

- 2) They are so unified around the pursuit of a few gifts that there is no variations:
 - a. “All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.” (14:26)
 - b. “If anyone speaks in a tongue, two – or at the most three – should speak.” (14:27)
 - c. The fact that this section begins with discussion of inspired utterances (12:3) and ends with an entire chapter explaining tongues and prophecy (14) we can safely assume that they were pursuing and practicing tongues to the level that many other gifts were being neglected. (In fact, there were so many speaking in tongues it is safe to assume that many of them were ignoring their God given gift and replacing it with inspired utterances that were either carnal or demonic.

In verses 4-11 you can see the stress that is placed on diversity and unity in

Below is a breakdown of the literal Greek of 1 Corinthians 12:4-11:

	DIVERSITY	UNITY
4	Now differences of gifts there are	But the same Spirit
5	And differences of ministries there are	And the same Lord
6	And differences of operations there are	But the same God
	operating all things	In all
7	But to each one is given	The manifestation of the Spirit to the profiting
8	For To one	Through the Spirit is given a word of wisdom
	And to another	A word of knowledge according to the same Spirit
9	To another	Faith by the same Spirit
	And to another	Gifts of cures by the one Spirit
10	And to another	Operations of powers
	To another	And prophecy
	And to another	Discernings of spirits
	To another	Kinds of tongues
	And to another	Interpretation of tongues
11	And all these things	Operates the one and the same Spirit
	Distributing separately to each one	As he purposes

It is noticeable in the above chart that the focus and flow of Paul’s discussion is not to provide an exhaustive list of the gifts nor is it even to explain or describe the gifts mentioned. It is frustrating and confusing to try describing these nine gifts mentioned here with the information provided because Paul is not doing a systematic discussion of the spiritual gifts but instead is trying to get the Corinthians in the correct balance with the Holy Spirit. The purpose of the list that Paul provides is to show the variety of gifts that the Corinthians are ignoring because they are over pursuing a few.

First Corinthians 12:4-11

12:4

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.

διαρεσεις	δε	χαρισματων	εισιν	το	δε	αυτο	πνευμα
Now differences		of gifts	there are	but	the	same	spirit

“Different kinds” - διαρεσεις - Means “distribution, difference, variety, distinctions, apportioning, dealing outs”. The focus of this word is on the distribution or apportioning variety. It is used nowhere else in the NT. In verse 11 **diaroun** (from the same root) is used and refers to the gifts being distributed among different people rather than referring to the different gifts. So again, the focus is on the distribution of variety to different people not so much on the difference itself.

“of gifts” - χαρισματων - from “**carisma**” or “**charisma**”. This word is unique with Paul (16 of 17 NT uses are Paul’s) and is used only in Greek in the NT. It is only used by one other person and that is Peter in 1 Peter 4:10. We can assume Peter got the term from Paul. Paul uses the word often in 1 Corinthians and Romans and once in each 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy.

- In 1 Corinthians 7:7 and the word “carisma” “charisma” or “gift” is translated “spiritual gift.”
- In Romans 1:11 the word “spiritual” or “pneumatikon” is added as an adjective to make it “spiritual gift”.
- In 1 Cor. 7:7 the word “carisma” or “charisma” refers to an ability or a given capacity to live life single.
- In Romans 6:23 it refers to the gift of salvation.
- “carisma” or “charisma” has at its root the word “caris” “charis” or “grace” which communicates the idea of something free, not earned, unmerited. It is something you could never have paid for or deserved. It is favor given by the one doing the giving.
- “carisma” then is the favor or gift one receives without having shown any merit.
- “carisma” is better translated “favors” or “graces”

So 12:1 says “spirituals” or “spiritual things” or “spiritual manifestations”.

There is no word for “gifts” in 12:1.

And 12:4 says “favors” or “graces”. The verse 12:4 would read:

• ***“the diverse dealing out of favors there are but the same spirit”***

There is a different word for “gift” in the Greek:

1. doma (1x) – present or gift
2. dosis (1x)– gift
3. dorea (11x) – gratuity, gift
4. dorema (1x)– bestowment, gift
5. doron (10x) – sacrificial present

None of these are used in 1 Cor. 12-14. The singular of these words often refers to salvation, righteousness, eternal life or Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5:15-17; 2 Cor. 9:15; Eph. 2:8; 3:7; 4:7; Heb. 6:4; James 1:17)

12:5

There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.

και διαίρεσεις διακονιων εισιν και ο αυτος κυριος:
and differences of ministries there are and the same Lord

“**different kinds**” or diaireseiV is the same word as above

“**of service**” is “diakoniwn” which is the genitive (“of . . .”) plural of the word diakonia ορ “diakonia” which means “administration, minister, office or service”. This comes from the word “diakonoV” where we get our word “deacon”. The emphasis here is service, aid, and ministry. It describes the servant in relationship to his work or service not in his relationship to people. It is interesting that Jesus is the servant and this phase of these three parts is associated with the Lord Jesus. This is the same word used to describe Jesus ministry and the ministry of his followers.

12:6

There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

kai diaireseiV energehmatwn eisin o de autoV qeoV
and differences of operations there are but the same God

o energwn ta panta en pasin
operating all things in all

“**different kinds**” or diaireseiV is the same word as above

“**of working**” is “energehmatwn ” which is a noun and is a rare use of this word as a noun. The verb use of this word means effective working. It means that something is accomplished by the effort of the work done. The English word “energy” can be seen in this Greek word “energehmatwn ” or “energmaton”. (The Greek word for work is “ergon”)

“**the same God works**” uses the Greek word “energwn” or “energon” which is present (see box below) active and means “to perform, to be at work, to be effective, to produce”.

INTERESTING NOTE:

The present tense means . . .conveys continuous or habitual action.

1) Continuous or uninterrupted action – John 15:4

“ . . .unless it [continuously] abides. . .unless you [continuously] abide. . .”

2) Action that happens over and over again – Matthew 10:1

“ . . .to [repeatedly] cast them out, and to [over and over again] heal every kind of disease.”

3) Customary or habitual action – Matthew 7:12

“ . . . you [customarily] want people to [customarily] treat you.”

Helping Words: *Continuously, repeatedly, over and over again, uninterruptedly, constantly, keep on, customarily, habitually.*

12:7

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

ekastw de didotai h fanerwsiV tou pneumatoV proV to sumferon.
but to each one is given the manifestation of the spirit to the profiting

This is Paul's thesis statement.

Verses 8-10 is an illustration of this thesis statement.

Verse 11 is this same thesis statement restated.

The Greek sentence begins with "each one" in the emphatic position which means this is the emphasis of the thesis statement.

"Each one" has something from the Holy Spirit. The emphasis here is not on the fact (1 Peter 4:10) that each person has a gift or a manifestation but on the fact that the Holy Spirit gives each person a gift which is stated to continue proving the wide diversity of the manifestations.

Important to notice that the word "carisma" or "charisma" translated usually as "gifts" or "spiritual gifts" is not in this sentence. Paul is not saying "each one is given a gift" but instead says "each one is given the "fanerwsiV tou pneumatoV" or "manifestation of the Spirit".

"manifestation" or "fanerwsiV" "phanerosis" means a "making clear, or a manifestation, setting forth plainly." The genitive is probably objective (*The International Critical Commentary*, Driver, Plummer and Briggs editors, *First Corinthians* by Robertson and Plummer, T & T Clark LTD, Edinburgh, Scotland, 1999, p.264) which means it would say:

- "the operation which manifests the Spirit" (objective)

and not:

- "the manifestation which the Spirit produces" (subjective)

The point remains though the emphasis is on the Holy Spirit manifesting among people and not on the gifts or favors (carisma). Thus the reason for using "manifestations" instead of "gifts". "Manifestations" focuses on the Holy Spirit while concern for the "gift" focuses on the one who has or receives the gift.

"for the common good" translates "proV to sumferon" "to the profiting" or "for the profiting". The manifestation of the Spirit is through the diverse individuals but it is not for the individuals. The diverse manifestations of the Spirit are for the group, the union, the cause.

This verse has said:

- The Spirit manifests
- Each one manifests the Spirit (emphasis here is still on diversity of the Spirit and not on everyone having a gift from God.)
- Now it says the reason the Spirit manifests diversely among each one: for the profiting or benefit of the whole or the group that is in union.
- Once again the point is unity with diversity. Why is there diversity among a unified group? To strengthen the group and to cause it to succeed.

The List of Nine Manifestations of the Spirit

How to Categorize or Classify these Nine Gifts

All of these have been suggested as ways of organizing the gifts in this list:

1. The list is written in descending order of value (Bruce)
2. Four Groups (Jones)
 - a. Intelligible Utterance – wisdom, knowledge, prophecy
 - b. Power – faith, healings, miracles
 - c. Spiritual Discernment – discerning of spirits
 - d. Ecstatic utterance – tongues, interpretation
3. Three Divisions (Brewster)
 - a. Illumination – wisdom, knowledge, discernment
 - b. Action – faith, miracles, healings
 - c. Communication – prophecy, tongues, interpretation
4. Three Groups
 - a. Gifts of Instruction – wisdom, knowledge
 - b. Gifts of Supernatural Power – faith, healings, miracles
 - c. Gifts of Inspired Utterance – prophecy, discerning prophecies, tongues, interpretation of tongues
5. Charismatic List
 - a. Gifts of Revelation – wisdom, knowledge, discerning of spirits
 - b. Gifts of Power – faith, miracles, healings
 - c. Gifts of Inspiration – prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues
6. Pairs of Gifts
 - a. Tongues and interpretation
 - b. Prophecy and discernment of spirits (spirits of the prophets)
 - c. Wisdom and knowledge
 - d. Healing and miracles
7. Peter’s Classification from 1 Peter 4:11 “If anyone speaks., let it be as words coming from God; if anyone ministers, let it be out of the strength God provides”
 - a. Speaking Gifts – wisdom, knowledge, prophecy, discerning, tongues, interpretation
 - b. Action – faith, healing, miracles,
8. The list is random – a couple of special named gifts for Corinth: wisdom and knowledge; a couple of typical manifestations like faith, healing, miracles; a couple of gifts that are causing the Corinthians problems: prophecy, tongues, interpretation
9. The list is not systematic, it is simply a sampling
10. The list is not exhaustive; the list could have been much longer, possibly endless.
11. Paul is grabbing at a list that is truly diverse to prove his point
12. Paul’s List taken from Paul’s clues in his writing
 - a. The third (faith) and eighth (tongues) gifts start with a different word for “another”.
 - b. The first two – wisdom and knowledge are important to Corinthian thinking.
 - c. Numbers three – seven (five gifts) all have a supernatural element
 - d. The last two – are the problem and the cause of these chapters

12:8

To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit

ω μεν γαρ δια του πνευματος διδοται λογος σοφιας
 for to one through the spirit is given a word of wisdom

αλλω δε λογος γνωσεως κατα το αυτο πνευμα,
 and to another a word of knowledge according to the same spirit

1. **Word of wisdom** “λογος σοφιας”
“logos”

“Sophia”

2. **Word of knowledge** “λογος γνωσεως”

“logos”

“gnosis”

12:9

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

eterw pistiV en tw autw pneumatw allw de carismata
to another faith by the same spirit and to another gifts

iamatwn en tw eni pneumatw,
of cures by the one spirit

3. **faith** “pistiV”

“pistis”

4. **gifts of healing** “carismata iamatwn”

“charismata”

“iamaton”

12:10

to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

allw de energmata dunamewn allw [de] profhteia
and to another operations of powers to another and prophecy

allw [de] diakriseiV pneumatwn, eterw genh glwsswn
and to another discernings of spirits to another kinds of tongues

allw de ermhneia glwsswn
and to another interpretation of tongues

5. **miraculous powers** “energmata dunamewn”

“energmata” – means “workings”

“dunamewn” – “miracles”

6. **prophecy** “profhteia”

“profhteia” – is the declaration of that which cannot be known by natural means. It comes from God and is the forth telling of the will of God concerning the past, present or the future.

7. **discernings of spirits** “diakriseiV pneumatwn”

“diakriseis” – means “judging between things, distinguish, discerning”

“pneuma” – means “current of air, breath, breeze. Used to refer to spirit of men or man’s soul, man’s disposition. Also refers to angels, demons or God’s Spirit.

8. **kinds of tongues** “genh glwsswn”

“yenos” – means “a generation, kind, stock”. Translated as “kind, kindred, offspring, nation, stock, born, diversity, country, countryman, generation.”

“glossa” it means tongue as in the organ and by implication it means language

9. **interpretation of tongues** “ermhneia glwsswn”

“hermeneia” – “interpretation, translation. It means to interpret what has been spoken obscurely by others.

“glossa” it means tongue as in the organ and by implication it means language

12:11

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines

panta de tauta energei to en kai to auto pneuma
and all these things operates the one and the same spirit

diairoun idia ekastw kaqwV bouletai
distributing separately to each one as he purposes

The List of Nine Manifestations of the Spirit

How to Categorize or Classify these Nine Gifts

All of these have been suggested as ways of organizing the gifts in this list:

1. The list is written in descending order of value (Origen, Bruce)
2. Four Groups (Jones)
 - a. Intelligible Utterance – wisdom, knowledge, prophecy
 - b. Power – faith, healings, miracles
 - c. Spiritual Discernment – discerning of spirits
 - d. Ecstatic utterance – tongues, interpretation

“propheteia” – is the declaration of that which cannot be known by natural means. It comes from God and is the forth telling of the will of God concerning the past, present or the future.

7. **discernings of spirits** “διακρισεις πνευματων”

“diakriseis” – means “judging between things, distinguish, discerning”

“pneuma” – means “current of air, breath, breeze. Used to refer to spirit of men or man’s soul, man’s disposition. Also refers to angels, demons or God’s Spirit.

8. **kinds of tongues** “γεννη γλωσσων”

“yenos” – means “a generation, kind, stock”. Translated as “kind, kindred, offspring, nation, stock, born, diversity, country, countryman, generation.”

“glossa” it means tongue as in the organ and by implication it means language

9. **interpretation of tongues** “ερμηνεια γλωσσων”

“hermeneia” – “interpretation, translation. It means to interpret what has been spoken obscurely by others.

“glossa” it means tongue as in the organ and by implication it means language

12:11

“All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.”

παντα□□□□δε□□□□ταυτα□□□□□□□□ενεργει□□□□το□□□□εν□□□□και□□□□το□□□□αυτο
□□□□□□□□πνευμα

and all these things operates the one and the same spirit

□

διαιρουν□□□□ιδια□□□□□□□□□□□□□□εκαστω□□□□□□□□□□καθως□□□□□□□□□□βουλεται
distributing separately to each one as he purposes

The Spiritual Charisma of 1 Corinthians 12:8-10:

1. **Word of Wisdom**

a. “logos sophia”

i. logos means it is a word and probably spoken meaning “message” or “utterance” of wisdom.

ii. Sophia is wisdom, which is the correct application of facts or knowledge.

b. This phrase means “message full of wisdom” or “message characterized by wisdom.”

c. This phrase has nothing to do with our modern idea of giving wise advice or counseling. The use of sophia in Corinth and in the Greek word itself does not allow this phrase to mean “the ability to give wise advice.” (*The new International Commentary of the NT, The First Epistle to the Corinthians* by Gordan D. Fee, p. 592 footnotes.)

d. Since Paul does not elaborate on this here or elsewhere in scripture this gift is open to a variety of interpretations many of which are simply hopeful or fanciful guesses.

e. Since it is only mentioned here to the Corinthians Paul may be countering the Corinthian’s obsession with the status symbol philosophical wisdom (1:22; 26-27)

f. Since Paul writes “word of wisdom” he is probably not referring to “wisdom” in general, but a special, momentary word or message of wisdom given by the Spirit.

- g. This is not an academic wisdom or wisdom gain from experience since these are attained naturally. The “word of wisdom” would be a “charisma” from the Spirit (12:4) to “serve” the church or its purpose (12:5) and “accomplish” God’s “work” (12:6).
- h. Pentecostals understand this to be a “word of revelation” to the church that applies scripture to a present situation.
- i. Old Testament examples may include Joseph interpreting Pharaoh’s dreams in Gen. 41 and Daniel interpreting dreams in Daniel 1:17 and 2:27-45. There could have been hundreds of meanings and ways of interpreting these dreams.
- j. New Testament examples may include
- k. Jesus promised this gift would manifest for his disciples in Luke 21:15 *“For I will give you **words** (στομα “stoma” “a mouth”) and **wisdom** (σοφια “sophia” “wisdom”) that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.”* And Matt. 10:19-20: *“When they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”*
- l. A dangerous or false view would include the concept that a word of wisdom reveals God’s thoughts, attitudes or will in a particular situation. For example, in 1883 the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith received a word or wisdom announcing to the church that tobacco, wine and hot drinks (coffee, tea, etc.) were evil.
- m. This view is held by Pentecostals such as Harold Horton who believes that the word of wisdom is a word of revelation speaking forth God’s purpose for individuals, the church or events.
- n. A more acceptable possibility is to consider the “word” to refer to “teaching” which would have the meaning of “teaching of wisdom.” This would occur while the teacher was presenting scripture and **received insight or wisdom to understand, explain or apply the already revealed word of God.**
- o. Word of wisdom may be found in Paul’s list of spiritual gifts in 1 Cor. 13 in verse 2 as **“can fathom all mysteries”** or literally, “know all the mysteries.”
- p. Again, we are working with very little information when we try to describe the word of wisdom from the Greek phrase “logos sophias”

2. Word of Knowledge

- a. “logos gnoseos”
 - i. “Logos” means it is a word and probably spoken meaning “message” or “utterance” of wisdom.
 - ii. “Gnosis” means “knowledge”. “Gnosis is used 29 times in the NT, 21 of those by Paul and 16 of those in First and Second Corinthians. Interestingly “epignosis” is never used in First and Second Corinthians.
- b. This would appear to be a compatible gift with word of wisdom.
- c. The emphasis is on “logos” or “word” and indicates it is the ability to express knowledge verbally
- d. It would involve saying or speaking or teaching because of “logos”
- e. Like above, what this gift actually involves is hard to define. Although this has not stopped commentators and teachers from sharing their guesses.
- f. The gift of knowledge appears three more times in 1 Co. 12-14:
 - i. 13:2 – Knowledge is mentioned along with the gifts of tongues, prophecy, faith and, potentially, the word of wisdom.
 - ii. 13:8-12 – It is said that the gift of knowledge will pass away along with prophecy and tongues

iii. 14:6 – Knowledge is listed along with revelation (Word of wisdom, maybe), prophecy and word of instruction (gift of teaching?) as being a byproduct of tongues.

g. The **gift of knowledge** is the ability to assimilate and explain the practical working out of God's plan concerning natural things in the here and now. The **gift of wisdom** then would be the ability to explain mysteries that go beyond our natural world.

h.

3. Faith

a. "pistis" means "faith"

b. "faith" is followed by "gifts of healings" and "working of miracles"

c. It is agreed universally that this is not the "faith" in Christ that leads to salvation.

d. This is the faith that empowers someone to be used by the Holy Spirit to believe, perform or endure.

e. This gift of faith goes beyond the normal and gives God a place in the human heart to perform a work through an individual

f. It has been described as an invincible confidence." This of course, also goes beyond the normal development of one's faith from hearing and understanding the written word of God.

4. Gifts of Healings

a. "charismata iamaton"

i. "charismata"

ii. "iamaton"

b. Sin and sickness are related in the Hebrew scriptures just as sin and death are associated.

c. An experience with sickness is an experience with sin either directly or indirectly.

i. Prayers for deliverance from sickness include a confession of sin

1. Ps. 38:2-6

2. Ps. 39:9-12

ii. Praise for deliverance from sickness include a recognition of having been forgiven

1. Ps. 30:2-5

2. Ps. 32:1-11

3. Ps. 103:3

d. OT prophecy promised that in the future when God dwelt in Zion that "No one living in Zion will say, 'I am sick; for the people who dwell there will have their sins forgiven.'" (Isaiah 33:24)

e. Jesus began his ministry by going through out Galilee teaching, preaching and healing (Matt. 4:23). Then again in 8:16-17; 12:15-16; 15:29-31)

f. Isaiah 61:1-2 promised the good news and the results of the Messiah's arrival and Jesus claimed this for himself in Luke 4:17-21

g. The disciples were given the same ministry of healing in Matthew 10:1, 7-8 (Mark 6:7-12; Luke 9:1-6) during Jesus' ministry.

h. The apostles continued to preach the good news and heal.

i. 1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30 is the only place in the epistles that the gifts of healings are explicitly mentioned.

j. James 5:13-16 describes the function of the elders of a local church to pray over and anoint with oil the weak or sick person. Again forgiveness of sins and healing are

associated with this event. But, it should be noted that James does not call this the “gift of healing” but refers to the prayer of faith.

- k. These are some of the ways healing occurred in the NT scriptures:
 - i. The teaching and preaching of the word brought healing (and salvation)
 - ii. The apostles were empowered with the gift of healing to draw attention to or confirm their message.
 - iii. The prayer of faith by the elders would raise the sick person up.
 - iv. The gift of healing was possessed by some but not all believers apparently beyond the scope of the apostles since Paul is listing it as a potential gift for the Corinthians.

5. Miraculous Powers

- a. “energemata dynameon” or “operations or workings of powerful deeds”
 - i. “energemata”
 - ii. “dynameon” – the root word “dyn” means “ability, capacity, power” and is used to translate the Hebrew word “gbr” which is used in the OT to convey the power of God to effect his will. (Note English word “dynamite”)
- b. Miracles are listed separately from the gifts of healing possibly for these reasons:
 - i. Healings were permanent changes where a miracle could be a momentary suspending of the laws of nature.
 - ii. Healings are heavily connected with salvation but miracles could be for a variety of reasons: adjust a situation, assist a believer, convince a skeptic, bring judgment on a person or group, confirm a message, etc.
- c. Miracles are mentioned in the epistles:
 - i. 2 Corinthians 12:12
 - ii. Hebrews 2:4
 - iii. Galatians 3:5
 - iv. 1 Thessalonians 1:5 – here the use of the phrase “God’s power” indicates another aspect of God’s miraculous power which is the changing of the human heart and nature. This is also mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:5 where the Corinthians are told their faith did “not rest on men’s wisdom but on God’s power”

6. Prophecy

- a. “propheta”
- b. The concept that **prophecy** is a form of expositional preaching from the bible is a laughable position and clearly indicates that the person presenting this idea is neither practicing expositional preaching nor exegetical teaching.
- c. Biblical prophecy (OT and NT) is much more than predicting future events. Read the OT prophets and you will see they were speaking more to the people of their generation than they were about eschatological events. Most often when the OT prophets spoke of eschatological events it was to encourage or warn the people of their generation.
- d. The practice of prophecy has been recorded as early as 1800 BC in the Near East. It was also practiced in Babylon and Assyria. Homer (700’s BC) mentions the practice of prophecy in Delphi (Apollo) and Dodona (Zeus) among the Greeks.

View Delphi photos

here: <http://holylandphotos.org/browse.asp?s=1,4,257,258>

- e. In Delphi two prophetesses worked fulltime for the multitudes who visited. The young virgins would sit on a tripod in a cave near the temple. Cave gases would surround the priestess. She would receive additional stimulus from chewed laurel leaves and a drink from the underground fountain. Soon the spirit of prophecy would come upon her and she would be overtaken with the spirit of Apollo. With her own voice and her own words the priestess/prophetess would express the non-verbal message given within her by Apollo. It was normal for these prophecies to be interpreted so that the individual who had come to worship at the temple and inquire of Apollo in the cave could understand the message. Many recorded questions and prophetic responses plus historical accounts of great men visiting this temple remain today.

7. **Discernings of Spirits**
8. **Kinds of Tongues**
9. **Interpretation of Tongues**

The Multiple Lists of Spiritual Activities Fade into Each other as Gifts:
12:8-10 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• message of wisdom• message of knowledge• faith• gifts of healings• miraculous power• prophecy• distinguishing between spirits• different kinds of tongues• interpretation of tongues
12:28-31 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• apostles• prophets• teachers• workers of miracles• gifts of healings• help others• gifts of administration• different kinds of tongues
12:29-31 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• apostles• prophets• teachers• work miracles

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gifts of healings • tongues • interpret tongues
<p>13:1-3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tongues • prophecy • fathom all mysteries (word of wisdom?) • knowledge (word of knowledge?) • faith (gift of miracles??) • giving (gift of helps?) • martyrdom (gift of faith??)
<p>13:8-9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prophecies (gift of prophecy) • tongues (gift of tongues) • knowledge (word of knowledge)
<p>14:6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tongues • revelation (word of wisdom) • knowledge (word of knowledge) • prophecy (gift of prophecy) • word of instruction (teaching)
<p>14:26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hymn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing <u>psalms</u>, <u>hymns</u> and <u>spiritual songs</u>. . .” Colossians 3:16 ○ “be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with <u>psalms</u>, <u>hymns</u> and <u>spiritual songs</u>. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord. . .” Ephesians 5:19) • word of instruction (teaching) • revelation (word of wisdom) • tongue • interpretation
<p>14:27-33</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tongue • interpret • prophets • others weigh carefully (discerning of spirits?) • speaker (teacher, tongues, prophecy, word of wisdom, word of instruction, word of knowledge, etc.) • revelation (word of wisdom?) • prophecy (revelation?)