

Sunday, October 8, 2017—I Corinthians 12:8-11

Introduction/Review

- Last Sunday we began our consideration of the paragraph beginning in verse 4 and running down through the end of verse 11. In doing so we looked at verses 4 through 7.
- In verses 4 through 6 we observed that there are diversities of gifts, administrations, and operations but that they all originate from within the Godhead. Paul did not want the formally idol worshiping Gentiles in Corinth (see verse 2) to be under the impression that there were different gods responsible for the varied activities of the Godhead.
- Verse 7 focuses the reader's attention on Paul's purpose in writing chapter 12, to explain spiritual gifts to the Corinthians.
 - I Corinthians 12:1, 4
- Note the verb tense "is given" in verse 7. The Spirit's manifestation through the gifts was being "given" to "every man" at the time of Paul's writing. Every individual believer was a part of this process according to verse 7.
- The "manifestation of the Spirit" was supposed to "profit" or benefit the saints. It was supposed to profit "withal." The English word "withal" is a combination of the words "with" and "all." It means "along with the rest; in addition; besides; moreover; likewise; as well."
 - Colossians 4:3
- The gifts were not given for the profit of the individual but for the profit of the entire body of Christ. A person's individual gifting was to work in concert with everyone else's individual gifts for the benefit of everyone. These gifts were not given for people to go into their own prayer closet and edify themselves. No, they were gifts for the "profit" and benefit of "withal."
- This morning I would like to look at the rest of this paragraph (verses 8-11) and comment on the types of gifts the Spirit was manifesting in Corinth.

I Corinthians 12:8

- **For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;**
- *For to one is given by the Spirit*—notice once again the tense on the verb "is given." Paul is writing this epistle at a time when God the Holy Spirit was giving these various manifestations to individual believers.

- *The word of wisdom*—the word translated “wisdom” is the Greek word *sophia*. It is used extensively in the New Testament and as far as I can tell is always translated as “wisdom” in English.
 - I Corinthians 1:17-30; 2:1-7, 13—we have already seen the Greek word *sophia* used extensively to compare the wisdom of the world with the wisdom of God.
 - Ephesians 3:10—the word is also used in connection with the revelation of the mystery in a variety of contexts.
 - Colossians 2:28
- The word of wisdom was a gift of the supernatural impartation of wisdom that could not be known any other way but by the Spirit of God.
- *the word of knowledge*—the word “knowledge” is a translation of the Greek word *gnosis*. Of the 29 times the word occurs in the New Testament it is translated “knowledge” 28 of them.
 - I Timothy 6:20—“science”
- Matthew 16:16-17
- Colossians 2:2-3—notice that wisdom and knowledge go together and that all the treasures thereof are hid in Jesus Christ.
- I Corinthians 12:8—it is my understanding based upon verse 7 that “the word of wisdom” and “the word of knowledge” are mentioned together in the same verse because they worked in conjunction with each other. “The word of knowledge” imparted supernatural knowledge that could not be known without God the Holy Spirit revealing it to the person. Meanwhile, “the word of wisdom” served the function of knowing how to properly apply spiritual truth made known via “the word of knowledge.”
- Before leaving verse 8 please note once again that the same Spirit who gave one person “the word of wisdom” gave to another “the word of knowledge.” Once again this proves that not everyone was given the same gift.

I Corinthians 12:9

- **To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;**
- *To another faith by the same Spirit*—the same Spirit who gave the gifts in verse 8 gave some the gift of faith in verse 9. This is not a reference to saving faith in terms trusting in the finished work of Christ as the only total and complete payment for sin.

- I Corinthians 13:2—“faith” in this context is referring to miraculous supernatural ability.
 - Matthew 17:20, 21:21—this type of faith was supposed to have been part of Israel’s program. Yet in I Corinthians we see Israel’s program working in and among the gentiles. How could this be?
 - Romans 11:11-14—it was part of Paul’s provoking ministry during the Acts period. It was a dispensational demonstration that Israel had lost her favored time past status, had been set aside, and that God was now going to the gentiles.
- *to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit*—once again this had been a part of Israel’s program during the earthy ministry of Christ as recorded in the Gospels.
 - Matthew 4:23, 10:1
 - John 4:48
 - Luke 8:1—Jesus was preaching and showing
- Acts 19:11-12
- Acts 28:8-9—these are the last recorded miraculous healings in the Bible.
- I Corinthians 12:9—the gifts of “faith” and “healing” were given by the same Spirit. Once again I think there is a reason why these two are mentioned together in this verse.

I Corinthians 12:10

- **To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:**
- *To another the working of miracles*—there must be something different about “the working of miracles” when compared with “healing” in verse 9 or they would not be listed separately. During the earthy ministry of Christ, he acted many times in miraculous fashion in which no one was healed.
 - John 2:1-12—Jesus turned the water into wine. Jesus performed many other miraculous acts that did not involve healing.
 - Feeding the 5,000
 - Calming the storm

- Acts 13:9-12—during the Acts period Paul worked miraculously as a means of confirming his preaching.
- I Corinthians 12:10—“the working of miracles” is different from healing. Notice how Paul was able to work many of these gifts, yet in Corinth the Spirit was dividing these manifestations up and dispensing them individually.
- *to another prophecy*—this gift is not related to an ability to “foretell” the future. Rather Paul is speaking about a forth-teller or one who was able to speak to the edification of the saints.
 - I Corinthians 14:3—in the absence of the completed canon of scripture the New Testament prophets spoke for God in addition to serving other functions.
- Ephesians 3:5—Paul is very clear that revelation of the mystery pertaining to the church the body Christ was given unto him by Jesus Christ himself. As Paul verbally proclaimed that message the Holy Spirit caused the prophets to remember what Paul had said regarding the mystery and to teach it to their assemblies.
- *to another discerning of spirits*—once again, in the absence of a complete written revelation from God the gift of “discerning of spirits” was related to discerning the validity of the prophetic utterings of the New Testament prophets. This was check and balance if you will against someone claiming to have the gift of prophecy and leading the church astray via their teaching.
- *to another divers kinds of tongues*—once again this was the supernatural ability to speak in languages that one had not studied.
- *to another the interpretation of tongues*—finally we have the supernatural ability to interoperate a language one had not studied. The addition of this gift highlights a change in how tongues worked at the time I Corinthians was written when compared with the original manifestation in Acts 2.
 - Acts 2:4-6—they heard them speaking their languages without the aid of an interpreter.
 - I Corinthians 14:27-28—if there was not an interpreter present Paul tells the Corinthians to not speak in tongues.

I Corinthians 12:11

- **But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.**
- All the gifts mentioned in verses 8 through 10 are the work of the same Spirit. This statement corresponds with verse 4.

- The same Spirit divided the gifts to everyman “severally” or “separately and distinctly” to everyman as He saw fit. You get what you get and you don’t throw a fit.