

Studies In First Corinthians

(I Corinthians 12:1-11)

1. What was the goal of Paul in writing about spiritual gifts?

So that those in Corinth were not ignorant concerning them: *“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant”* (I Corinthians 12:1).

- The purpose of teaching is to remove ignorance (I Corinthians 10:1 and I Thessalonians 4:13).
- Ignorance is not a good thing (Acts 17:30, Romans 10:1-3, and Ephesians 4:17-18).

2. Did the Christians in Corinth have any past involvement with idolatry?

Yes: *“Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led”* (I Corinthians 12:2).

- The past of a person who has been truly converted to Christ (Acts 3:19) may contain many sinful things (I Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 4:8, Titus 3:1-3, and I Peter 4:1-5).
- The phrase “dumb idols” means they cannot talk (Psalms 115:1-8, Psalms 135:15-18, Isaiah 46:6-7, and Habakkuk 2:18-19).

3. Concerning those moved by spirits, what was a sure test that would identify the Holy Ghost from another spirit?

Another spirit would not confess Christ: *“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”* (I Corinthians 12:3).

- Mark 9:38-40 and I John 4:1-6.

4. Were there different gifts, administrations, and operations?

Yes: *“(4) Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. (5) And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. (6) And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all”* (I Corinthians 12:4-6).

- There are different gifts (Romans 12:6 and I Corinthians 12:28).
- There is one Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:4).
- There are different operations [services] with those gifts (Romans 12:7-8 and I Corinthians 14:22).
- Even the same gifts might have different administrations [workings] (Acts 2:4-12 / I Corinthians 14:27-28).

5. To whom was the manifestation of the Spirit given?

Everyone (understanding we're talking about Christians): *"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal"* (**I Corinthians 12:7**).

- Those who obeyed the Gospel would receive the Spirit (**Acts 2:38**).
- That was done through the laying on of the Apostles hands (**Acts 8:12-24** and **Acts 19:1-7**).
- The profit was the confirmation of the word of God/proof of the teacher (**Mark 16:15-20**, **Acts 19:13-20**, and **Hebrews 2:1-4**).

6. How were wisdom and knowledge gained prior to the New Testament being fully revealed?

Spiritual gift from the Holy Spirit: *"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit"* (**I Corinthians 12:8**).

- **Ephesians 1:17-18**, **Colossians 1:9-10**, and **James 1:5**.

7. Did the Holy Spirit enable people to be able to heal others?

Yes: *"To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit"* (**I Corinthians 12:9**).

- Though faith comes through the word (**Romans 10:17**), they needed help before the word was fully revealed (**John 14:26**).
- Healing (**Acts 3:1-11**, **Acts 5:16**, **Acts 10:38**, and **James 5:14-15**).
- Remember, like all spiritual gifts, healings confirmed the word (**Mark 16:15-20**). Thus, healings, even during the time of miracles, would not occur if the goal of confirming the word wasn't going to be accomplished (**Matthew 13:53-58** and **II Corinthians 12:6-10**).

8. Were Christians in the first century given a supernatural ability to discern spirits?

Yes: *"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"* (**I Corinthians 12:10**).

- **I Corinthians 14:37** and **Revelation 2:2**.
- All of these things were temporary (**I Corinthians 13:8-10**; cf. **James 1:25**).

9. Who made the choice of what spiritual gifts were given to certain people?

The Spirit: *"But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will"* (**I Corinthians 12:11**).

- This is why they are called "Spiritual Gifts" (**Acts 1:8** and **Romans 15:19**).