

Exegesis of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

By

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BACKGROUND TO PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

The City of Corinth was in many ways the most prominent and the most influential Greek metropolis in the first century.¹ The city was located at land bridge or Isthmus that owed its wealth to its location on two seas.² The Roman consul *Mummius* had destroyed the city in 146 B.C, and for almost a century, it had laid waste and desolate until 46 B.C, when Julius Caesar rebuilt and resettled it with Roman citizens, making it a Roman colony with Roman military and political officials in charge.³ In the decade that ensued the city began to flourish and prosper, and in 27 B.C it became the seat of the governor of the province of Achaia, which eventually developed into a senatorial province in A.D.44 .Like many modern cities, the city was intellectually arrogant, materially affluent and morally bankrupt; sin of every kind flourished in this city.⁴ Also, the city was given to the worship of idols such as: *Isis*, *Serapis* and many other gods and goddesses. In the city, religion and vices were intertwined. Pagan temples stood everywhere dedicated to Aphrodite, the goddess of love and lust.⁵ The city of Corinth was known in and around the Mediterranean world for its corrupt practices, and it was at this city that Paul established his church which later became a force to be reckoned with in the whole province.

¹Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* (Leicester, England: Intervarsity Press, 1990), 432.

²Hans Conzelmann, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 1.

³ Miliard J. Berquist, *Studies in First Corinthians* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1960), 2.

⁴Berquist, 2. Among the New Testament writings the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians is given prominence and attention because it finds solution to many crises that have bedeviled the church from generation to generation.

⁵Ibid.

There is no serious disagreement among scholars about Pauline authorship of the first epistle to the Corinthians.⁶ Paul was believed to be the authentic author of the epistle. The early church Fathers had no difficulties in accepting his authorship of the epistle. When reading through the epistle, there is no doubt that the style, language and composition of the epistle is Paul's.⁷

⁶Raymond B. Brown, "First Corinthian" in *The Broadman Commentary, Acts-1Corinthian* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1976), 10: 288

⁷There are thirteen letters attributed to Paul, seven of it remains undisputed these are Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, 1 Thessalonians, Philippians, Philemon and other epistles purported to be written by Paul are attributed to either an early century Paulinist or a disciple of Paul who wants the name of his master to be written on the platter of Gold. The critical scholars proposed that: 1. The pastoral (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon) and the prison letters (Ephesians, Colossians and probably Philippians) of Paul were probably second century writings with no Pauline idea except that which has filtered through the mind of an unknown disciple imitating his master. 2. There are number of verses that are genuine Pauline fragments but the majority of the content is from the hand of an early second century Paul's disciple. 3. The content of the letters were genuinely Pauline but the changes in literary style in the pastoral and the prison letters is attributed to the work of an amanuensis or secretary. The evangelical scholars, however, do not agree to the above positions they hold on to the traditional view that affirms Paul's authorship. They claimed that the style and the language, the literary genre together with the theological views and themes used in these letters are not different from Paul's. So, it seems then that the arguments against Pauline authorship are not decisive. The critical scholars do not take in to consideration the fact that a person like Paul was capable of adapting to a new situation and to a new concept where the older one do not meet the need. Therefore, because of these endless disagreements between the scholars from the evangelical and the liberal persuasions, I will not discuss gifts of the Spirit from the epistles that are not generally acceptable as Pauline though, I am more comfortable with the evangelical position that affirms the Pauline authorship of all the epistles that bear his name. Besides these disagreements, there are other relevant passages that bear similar explanation on the issue of spiritual gifts. For example 1 Cor. 12:4-10 is similar in content to some passages in Eph. 4:4-16. For example the Spirit, Lord and God are introduced in the same way in Ephesians as found in 1 Cor. 12:4-6. Also the gifts are distributed to each as an expression of God's grace both in Eph. 4:7-11 as well as in 1 Cor. 12:7,11; three of the five ministries mentioned are the same namely, apostles, prophets and teachers, the other two that are not mentioned are related ministries of evangelists and pastors. See Donald Guthrie *New Testament Introduction*. (Leicester, England: Intervarsity Press, 1990), 32ff Fee *God's Empowering Presence and the Epistle of First Corinthians*, 699-708 and Carson, Moo and Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 264-268.

There are also gifts overlaps in some of these corpuses. In both correspondences, the analogy of the church as the body of Christ is stressed. For these reasons, I will limit myself mainly to 1 Corinthians. In 2Tim 1:6, Paul told Timothy to fan into flame the gift, which he received through the laying of hand. The gift Paul was referring to is nothing but the *charisma* with which he (Timothy) would function in his ministry at Ephesus. This *charisma* came into manifestation through prophecy and laying on of hands of the presbytery.

In Galatians, the word gifts were not mentioned per se but Paul enjoins the Christians in Galatia to walk in the Spirit in other not to fulfill the lust of the flesh. To the Thessalonians, Paul encouraged them not to quench the spirit and not to despise prophecy but they should test every spirit whether they are of God.

OCCASION AND PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE

Paul was at Corinth in A.D. 51. He left Corinth probably in A. D.51 or 52. He was in Ephesus for less than three years (Acts 19:8-10; 20:31). Therefore, first Corinthians was probably written in either A.D. 54 or 55.⁸ The church at Corinth was founded through the missionary effort of Paul supported by Priscilla and Aquila during his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1-17). After founding the church, the apostle returned to Jerusalem, thus fulfilling his mission at Corinth. He later went to Ephesus where he had a wonderful ministry in spite of many obstacles that came along his way. It was not long after he left Corinth that the Gnostic took over the church introducing heretical teachings that are contrary to the gospel.⁹ They taught about free attitude to sexual matters and promoting a kind of knowledge that negate the true knowledge of God as revealed by the Scriptures. These false teachers succeeded in causing confusion within the church.¹⁰ When reading through this epistle, certain concerns are evident. These concerns are centered on the report, which some people from Chloe's household gave to Paul in 1 Cor. 1:10. Paul began his letter based on these reports which also introduced the major sections that run from 1 Cor. 1:10 to 6:20. These sections contain Paul responses to issues such as factionalism and rivalry, sexual immorality and believers instituting lawsuits against fellow believers in the court that was presided over by unbelievers. Paul addresses these problems and their underlying causes.¹¹

⁸ Brown, 288

⁹Conzelmann, 12

¹⁰S. J. Hafeman, "Corinthian, Letter to the" in the *Dictionary of Paul and His Letter* (Leicester, England: Intervarsity Press, 1993), 165.

¹¹ See Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* and Carson et al *An Introduction to the New Testament*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishers, 2005), 265ff,

Also a letter from the Corinthian church probably through either Stephanas or Fortunatus was sent to Paul asking him for advice concerning the following issues: About marriage and celibacy (1 Cor. 7:1-38),¹² Whether the Christian can eat food sacrifice to idols (1Cor 8:1-11), About the misconduct in worship and the abuse of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:12-13), About the heretical denial of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:1-58), About the collection for the saints (1 Cor. 16: 1ff), About the coming of Apollo to the church (1 Cor. 16:12).¹³ Into this second list of concerns belongs the issue about the spirituals or spiritual things (gifts) (1 Cor. 12:1-14:40).¹⁴ Paul devoted part of his time to resolve this issue about *charismata*. Scholars generally believed that Paul brought in *charismata* as a corrective of the Corinthians' aberrant spirituality.¹⁵ But is this so? It may be and it may not because no one is sure what Paul had in mind but one can speculate. Using historical-critical method of explaining biblical text and with the plethora of materials available on the issue of *charismata* in Corinthian church, one is tempted to pitch his tent with those who thinks that *charismata* was brought in to correct the Corinthians' aberrant spirituality. These *pneumatikoi* Christians tend to categorize themselves as superior than *apneumatikoi* (unspiritual) and to put their understanding in correct perspectives, he devoted his time and energy to explain the operations of these

¹²Ibid. Carson et al noted that at some point during his Ephesians ministry, Paul received reports from "some from Chloe's household" (see 1:11) about the ugly incident at Corinth. The church officials at Corinth too Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus brought not only gift from the Corinthians but also the church's letter and their own verbal reports, which established Paul's agenda as he wrote First Corinthians. *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 265

¹³Schatzman, 30.

¹⁴Many scholars have attributed the problem in Corinthian Church to the abuse of spiritual gifts especially the gift of tongues (*glossolalia*), which may be part of the problem, but this writer believes that apart from the abuse of *glossolalia*. Another reason which this writer believe was fundamental to Paul's response to the inquirer is to educate the Corinthian church about the operation of the manifestations of the gifts of the spirit in the life of the individual members of the church at Corinth, knowing their past pagan experiences, which he referred to in verses 2 and 3. Paul sought the need to educate the Corinthians believers on the operation of the gifts of the spirit in the church which was quite distinct from the pagan practices.

¹⁵ Hemphill, 8

charismata in Chapter 12-14 and concluded that any gifts that is manifested outside love does not profit anybody 1 Cor. 13:1ff.¹⁶

Thus, Paul's discourse in this chapter 12:1-11 is principally to educate the Corinthian brethren the importance of the manifestation of the Spirit of God in the lives of individual members of the community of faith and to avoid the abuse of it.

EXEGESIS OF 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-11

1 Corinthians 12:1

Verse 1. Περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν, ἀδελφοί, οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν

Translation:

Now about spiritual things (people) I would not want you to be ignorant brothers.

IMPORTANCE OF PROPER KNOWLEDGE ABOUT *CHARISMATA* (Verse 1-3)

Verse 1. The phrase Περὶ δὲ in this chapter is the same expression used in 1 Corinthians 7:1 and 1 Corinthians 8:1 which implies that Paul was responding to a report sent to him from either the Chloe's household or someone within the church.¹⁷ In the first verse of chapter 12, Paul used an indeterminate gender τῶν πνευματικῶν as a neuter or as a masculine noun.¹⁸ As a neuter noun, it is translated to mean "spiritual things" but as a masculine noun it means spiritual people.¹⁹ What favors the translation of the verse is the usage in 1 Cor. 14:1 where Paul used the word with an imperatival force "be zealous for

¹⁶J. W. MacGorman, *The Gift of the Spirit; An Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1974), 15.

¹⁷Charles Hodge, *A Commentary of 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Banner of trust 1983), 239. Some scholars such as Thiselton and Mitchell endorsed the widespread view that Περὶ δὲ signal a new topic. Hurd and Hodge did not deny the fact that Περὶ δὲ marked a response to questions from Corinth was probable Origin of 1 Corinthians, 61-71

¹⁸Fee, 153.

¹⁹Ibid.

“τας πνευματικας .”²⁰ On the contrary, the usage in 1 Cor. 2:15; 3:1 and 14:37 favors the masculine noun where Paul referred to persons as spiritual people. For example in 1 Cor. 14:37 Paul says, “if anyone thinks he or she is πνευματικοί”²¹ that is spiritual. Ben Witherington III observes that this rendering in 1 Cor 14:37 may reflect the problems in Corinthian church since the conflict is not over spiritual manifestations per se but over the significance of tongue speaking for spiritual life.²² But from the context of 1 Cor. 12:1-11, the issue of tongue does not arise; the spiritual people (πνευματικοί) need to be educated about the operations of the Spirit that is manifested during worship.

In First Corinthians πνευματικοί is used fifteen times in adjectival or substantival form²³ and in 1 Cor. 12:1 it is used as parallel usage introducing the issue of the spiritual ones within the Corinthian church who were gifted.²⁴ Schatzman says “if this is what Paul meant, then the translation would read and now concerning the *pneumatics*.”²⁵ The translations followed by most translators are suggestive.²⁶ Paul uses the word πνευματικός and *χαρίσματα* interchangeably and at times used it synonymously. When the translation follows the root word “πνευμά” it stresses the spiritual nature or sources of a particular ability hence, the translation “now concerning the spiritual things” which refers primarily to the manifestation of the Spirit. But when it follows the root word

²⁰R.S.H. Lenski. *The Interpretation of Saint Paul's First and Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press, 1937), 490.

²¹Schatzman, 27.

²²Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio- Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthian* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: The Paternoster Press, 1975), 257.

²³Fee, 153.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Schatzman, 27.

²⁶ See KJV, NKJV, RSV, NRSV, NIV

χαρις the emphasis shifted to the gift of grace and the translation becomes “now concerning the spiritual gift”²⁷

Πνευματικός in this chapter is used with more restricted reference to spiritual gifts and it is synonymous with *χαρίσματα*. *Πνευματικός* is a favourite term for many of the Corinthian believers but Paul brought in *χαρίσματα* in this context to educate the *πνευματικός* on the need to understand the operations of the Spirit, however, some scholars think that Paul brought in *χαρίσματα* as an apostolic corrective²⁸ to replace an already misused word (*Πνευματικοί*). The word *χαρίσματα* is used only in verse 4, and it was used as synonyms for other related term.²⁹ Paul wants the *πνευματικοί* to realize that the manifestations of God’s presence on an individual members of the community of faith is unmerited gifts of God’s grace; it is God who is at work in the individuals, the treasure is God’s not his, therefore believers should not remain unaware of this operation or remain ignorant about these manifestations. God manifests himself in diverse ways as he wills. Therefore, Christians should not be ignorant about these operations. Paul’s desire is to educate the pneumatics in Corinthian church on how to

²⁷Schweitzer, Πνεύμα, πνευματικά, *TDNT*, 9: 437.

²⁸Schatzman, 5.

²⁹ Paul did not use the word *charismata* exclusively; he used other synonyms both in verbal and substantival forms. Just like *χαρίζομαι* expresses the general action of forgiving or giving, *δοδωμι* denotes the same basic function. *χαρίσμα* is connected with *χαρις*, which stresses the idea of gift. It occurs five times in Romans 5: 15-17 with three different Greek terms *χαρις* is linked with God in Rom 3:24; 15:15, it is connected with Christ in Rom 16:20 and it is simply defined as God’s unmerited, undeserved and special favor towards mankind who is already doomed for eternal punishment. *δωρεα* is found five times in Paul and 11 times in the New Testament. It is a related word used interchangeably with *χαρίσμα*. See Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 235. See also H. Vorlander "δωρων," in *Dictionary of the New Testament Theology* ed. By Collin Brown (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Paternoster Press, 1986), 2:40-48 G. Schneider , "δωρεα," in *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 1:364. The word “gift” signifies freeness and in the New Testament it is used only of God’s gracious gift to mankind. The freeness is emphasized by the link with *χαρις*. Schneider, "δωρεα," *EDNT*, 1: 364; Cranfield, 284.

properly handle the things of the spirit, knowing their background and need for him to properly educate them on spiritual matters.

Vs 2-3 Οἴδατε ὅτι ὅτε ἔθνη ἦτε πρὸς τὰ εἰδωλα τὰ ἄφωνα ὡς ἂν ἤγεσθε ἀπαγόμενοι.

3. διὸ γνωρίζω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ λαλῶν λέγει· Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς, καὶ οὐδεὶς δύναται εἰπεῖν· Κύριος Ἰησοῦς, εἰ μὴ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ.

Translation

You know that when you were pagans, *you were* led astray to the dumb idols, however you were led.

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.

Verse 2. African Christians appreciate the fact that no one is born a Christian. Every Christian becomes one when they acknowledge the Lordship of Christ through his work on the cross and the subsequent redemption of mankind made available to all, the Corinthian Christians were no exception. Christians, whether Western or Asian or African has a past, and they need to be reminded of their past so that they can be conscious of their present position in Christ. Scholars from different shades of persuasion have attempted to exegete and interpret this verse but no one has been able to convincingly explain what Paul had in mind.³⁰ But what is certain is that the Corinthian Christians were religious (pagan) and there was the tendency to bring their former religious practices to bear on their worship experience. African Christians may not have problem with this verse because of their past religious experience in African religions. They had been led astray, thinking that there was gain in fetish practices or idol

³⁰ See Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (Edinburgh; T and T Clark, 1963), 259 and Anthony Thiselton “The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians” *NIGTC*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Williams Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 911-912

worshipping; little did they realize that they were in bondage to satanic manipulations. Yes, in African religions, people still worship divinities and deities which were not mute but active in communicating with the adherent.³¹ There is every possibility for a new convert in Christ to be easily carried away by these religious practices if they were not disciplined after conversion. Many converts need to be disciple before they can properly understand the operations of God.

Some scholars' think that Paul was warning the Corinthian Christians who had apparently been misled about "spiritual-expressions,"³² they note that "Paul reminds them that as ethnic-people of the Gentile nations they had been led astray and duped into the idolatrous practices of devotion to impersonal idols."³³ These are speculations, what Paul had in mind was to remind the Corinthian Christians about their former condition in their past religious experience and now that they were in Christ they should no longer be enticed into idolatrous practices. In African religious practices the mark of spirituality is the ability to see into the future or to display some ecstatic experience, which is a common religious performance among the pagans. Paul seems to be warning the Corinthian Christians to beware lest they equate the manifestation of God's Spirit with what goes on among the pagans.³⁴ The Gentile Christians were once being held captive

³¹ See E. B Idowu, *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief* (London: MacMillan Publishers, 1962), 1ff, J. O. Awolalu *Yoruba Beliefs and Sacrificial Rites*, (Essex, United Kingdom: Longman Group Limited, 1979), 1-182 John Mbiti, *African Philosophy and Religions* London: Heinemann Publishers, 1969 and A. B. Jacobs, *A Textbook on West African Traditional Religions* (Ibadan; Aromolaran Press, 1977), 117-153

³² James A, Fowler *Charismata: Rethinking the So-Called Spiritual Gifts* e-book, 1999.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ From the writer's background in African religions there is the tendency to bring into the church unchristian practices especially when a church is established in a pagan community. The converts need to be properly disciplined and monitored so that no iota of syncretism would be brought to the church. Those who have been converted to Christianity need to be reminded often about their past life and their present condition in Jesus Christ. There is no doubt, the demons have influence over the unregenerate souls in Corinth but when they became Christians they were set free from the shackles of the devil. Though when they were in the world they were being influenced by these demonic forces to curse Jesus but now that they have acknowledge Jesus as Lord, their prophecy and ecstatic speech has been refined and made pure by Jesus, so in their present state they are operating the gifts by the Holy Spirit. See Cleon L. Rogers Jr and

by their former belief in Idol worship but now they should beware so that they would not be preoccupied with anything other than God in Christ. This led Paul to the next verse where Christological test for genuine manifestation of the spirit is the proclamation of the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Verse 3. The emphatic διὸ “therefore,” concludes this opening word. The verb “I make known to you” γνωρίζω ὑμῖν recalls the “I don’t want you to be ignorant” of verse 1.

The genuine speaking by the Spirit of God confessed and exalted the Lord Jesus Christ. What may appear to be supernaturally inspired utterances or expressions are not necessarily derived from the Spirit of Christ or God.³⁵ Men are easily deceived into thinking that supernatural phenomenon are necessarily wrought by God, whereas they are often energized by the demonic powers inherent in idolatry (cf. Acts 17:22; I Cor. 10:17-21), as the Corinthians should have recognized.³⁶ In the context of I Corinthians 12: 3 Paul did not deny the fact that the *spirituals* though having pagan background were inspired by the Spirit. He was simply making a distinction between those who were Christians and those were not Christians because both do manifest supernaturally. The non Christians were being motivated by demons while the Christians were motivated by the Spirit of Christ.

Fowler notes that “spiritual expressions or utterances, derived as they must be from the Spirit of Christ will never be contradictory to the character of Christ Both in

Cleon L. Rogers III *New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 377

³⁵ Schatzmann 27-28

³⁶ Ibid

word and deed they will confess the Lordship of Christ (cf. Gal. 5:22, 23).”³⁷ The Holy Spirit will not misrepresent Jesus Christ in speech or character, but will always represent Jesus Christ consistently with who He is as Lord, embodied in Christians individually and collectively.³⁸ Schatzman observes the following from the syntactical construction of vs 3. In 3a Paul expressed something about those who spoke pneumatically that is, in or by the Spirit namely, that they could not say Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς, In 3b the stress is on those who confessed Κύριος Ἰησοῦς, εἰ μὴ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ and Paul declared that such confession is uttered in or by the Holy Spirit³⁹

DIVERSITIES OF *CHARISMATA* IN 12:4-6

1 Corinthians 12: 4-6

Verse 4. Διαίρεσεις δὲ χαρισμάτων εἰσὶν τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα

Translation:

Now there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit

Verse 5 καὶ διαίρεσεις διακονιῶν εἰσιν καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς κύριος·

Translation:

And there are diversities of service but the same lord

Verse 6. καὶ διαίρεσεις ἐνεργημάτων εἰσὶν καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς θεὸς ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν

Translation:

And there are diversities of workings but the same God works all in all.

³⁷ Fowler, e-book 1999

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Schatzmann

Verses 4-6

In the previous passages, Paul had already established that the primary test for genuine giftedness of the Spirit in speech and utterance is the acknowledgement of Jesus Christ as Lord. Paul now began his explanation of the manifestations of the Spirit in verses 4-6. These verses serve as foundation for Paul's teaching on *charismata*. In these verses, Paul points out the essential unity of these varied gifts. The term *διαιρέσεις* appears only here in the New Testament and it means diversities, varieties, differences or distribution depending on the context.⁴⁰ The word *διαιρέσεις* is from a root expressing the idea of a division.⁴¹ The noun might mean apportionment, allotment, though most versions render it as diversities or varieties.⁴² The *charismata* here is peculiar to Paul, it means special endowment the Lord confers on people. The word is from the same root as *pneuma* which stresses the freeness or the bounty of the gifts.⁴³ Morris says *charisma* can be used in a general sense of God's gift to people as in Romans 11:29 or as the spiritual gifts that Paul wished to share among the Romans in 1:11-12 and here in verse 4, it is used basically for the special manifestation of the Holy Spirit within the Church.⁴⁴ There are three other nouns mentioned in this passage. These nouns are parallel in usage. They are *χαρισμάτων*, *διακονιών* and *ἐνεργημάτων*.

⁴⁰ Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Miller, "πνευματικά," *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 2000), 109. See also Rogers and Rogers *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament*, 377-378

⁴¹ Leon Morris, 167.

⁴² Rogers, 377.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Morris, 167.

The second parallel noun is *διακονιῶν* from *διακονος*, the word that expresses the idea of service.⁴⁵ Schatzman posits that, “only in different kind of service exists the legitimatization of *charismata*.”⁴⁶ He also observes that, there can be no kind of services which are not spiritual manifestations wrought by the Spirit, for a person’s gift becomes his ministry.⁴⁷ This writer believes that there are different ways of serving yet it is the same spirit that is working in the individual. In this passage, the Lord is mentioned in between the Spirit and God. Morris agreeing with Fee suggests that Paul does not formally enunciate the doctrine of the trinity but passages like this are distinctly Trinitarian in character.⁴⁸ Both observed that passages like this are the stuff from which later theological constructs are correctly derived.⁴⁹

The third parallel word in this verse is *ἐνεργημάτων*, which is derived from *ἐνεργημάτα*⁵⁰, which means “energy,” “power or effective actions.”⁵¹ This word is close in meaning to *δυναμεις*, but it is considerably less frequently used. The word is used with reference to power, the outworking power of God in action. What Paul probably sought to establish was the fact that God energizes all enabling graces thus *charismata* becomes the demonstration of the power of God effected in service.⁵²

⁴⁵This word is applied originally to the service of a table waiter or waitress. Then it came to be used of service generally and with the New Testament. It is often used of the service that Christians should render God See Beyer *διακονια Theological Dictionary of New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), 2: 85.

⁴⁶Schatzman, 34.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Morris, 168.

⁴⁹Fee, 103.

⁵⁰H. Paulsen *ἐνεργεια Exegetical Dictionary of New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 453.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²C.K. Barret, *Commentary on First Corinthians* (New York: Harper and Bros Publishers, 1968),

THE PURPOSE OF *CHARISMATA*

12:7 ἐκάστῳ δὲ δίδεται ἡ φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit.

The word δίδεται is a present passive indicative showing the habitual and repeated action of the giver, who is God.⁵³ To each Christian individually and particularly, God gives the unique opportunity for the manifestation, expression, or showing forth of the Spirit toward the collective advantage of the whole community of faith.⁵⁴ Here again, is diversity within unity as individual Christians function for the common good. Plummer and Robertson note that the purpose of all these various gifts, like their origin, is one and the same—the good of the congregation; they are bestowed to be exercised for the benefit of all.⁵⁵

φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος (tou Pneumatos) should not be construed as a particular “gift” that belongs to or is possessed by an individual Christian, as this tends to postulate a separate “gift” distinct from the action of the “Giver.” Rather, the Spirit of God in Christ expresses Himself in a variety of ways for the unified purpose of bringing together the people of God in a common unity, i.e. community. These *charismata* are not for self glorification, nor for the spiritual benefit of the recipient, but for that of the whole community of faith⁵⁶

⁵³ Rogers and Rogers, 377

⁵⁴ Hans Conzelmann regarded this verse as the summary of verse 4-6 or as providing the heading for verses 8-10. He notes that vs 7 plainly shows that the triadic differentiation is meant as a pointer to the origin and nature of the gifts, not as a schematic division into three different sources of origin. Here, the Spirit is the sole Giver of all the gifts

⁵⁵ Plummer, 264

⁵⁶ Ibid. Plummer and Archibald note “some ambiguities in the translation of this verse, he said rather than the verse to reads the manifestations it should have read the operation which manifest the spirit rather than subjective, the manifestation which the spirit produces there are many such double genitives,

MANIFESTATIONS OF THE SPIRIT IN 1 COR. 12:8-11

1 Corinthians 12:8-10

Verse 8. ὃ μὲν γὰρ διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος δίδεται λόγος σοφίας, ἄλλω δὲ λόγος γνώσεως κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα,

Translation:

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

Verse 9. ἑτέρω πίστις ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ πνεύματι, ἄλλω δὲ χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ πνεύματι,

Translation:

To another faith by the same spirit and to another gifts of healing by the same spirit.

Verse.10 ἄλλω δὲ ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων, ἄλλω [δὲ] προφητεία, ἄλλω [δὲ] διακρίσεις πνευμάτων, ἑτέρω γένη γλωσσῶν, ἄλλω δὲ ἑρμηνεία γλωσσῶν.

Translation:

To another working of miracles another prophecy, another distinguishing of spirit to another speaking in tongues to another interpretation of tongues

Verse 11 πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἐνεργεῖ τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα διαιροῦν ἰδίᾳ ἐκάστῳ καθὼς βούλεται.

Translation

But all of these are working by the self and same spirit through individual believers according as he wills

Exegesis

which is correct the manifestation given by the Spirit or the Spirit given by the manifestation”
International Critical Commentary on Epistle of St. Paul to the First Corinthians 264

This section is Paul's longest list of grace endowments. Barrett tries to separate these lists of gifts from other gifts mentioned by Paul. He follows Paul's introductory statement Περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν, and maintains that these gifts are uniquely manifestations of the Spirit.⁵⁷ There is no need to categorize the manifestations because it is the same Spirit that is working in the community of faith to up build the church and equip the saints for the work of the ministry. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every believer for the benefit of all. Therefore according to K. Stendahl, Paul effectively eliminates every form of structuring the manifestation of the Spirit into a hierarchy of values.⁵⁸ In fact, it would be wrong to attribute to Paul a conscious grouping into hierarchy of *charismata* as F.F Bruce and other scholars have done.⁵⁹ This is not to deny the facility of grouping them together as Michael Green has done. For instance Green grouped the gifts into three classes:

1. Gift to know (wisdom, knowledge and discerning of spirit).

2. Gift to do (faith, healing and miracle).

3. Gift to say (prophecy, tongues and interpretation).⁶⁰ Paul did not have it in mind to group this gifts together like some modern scholars do, what Paul did probably was to bring orderliness to the church by educating the pneumatics on the operation of the Spirit and the correct attitudes they should have towards one another in their fellowship.

Paul lists these manifestations as follows in verses 8-10

⁵⁷ C. K Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Corinthians*. In *Harpers New Testament Commentaries*, ed. Henry Chadwick, New York: Harpers and Row, 1973), 284

⁵⁸ K. Stendahl, "Glossolalia," *The New Testament Evidence in Paul among the Jews and Gentile* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 112.

⁵⁹ F. F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians in the New Century Bible Commentary* ed. Matthew Black. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Williams Eerdsman Publishing, 1971), 118.

⁶⁰ Michael Green, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989. 165.

Word of wisdom	discernment of the Spirit	prophecy
Word of knowledge	speaking in tongues	interpretation of tongues
Faith (Special)	Gifts of healings	working of miracles

Word of Wisdom

In the Corinthians church, wisdom was a common language they always referred to. Apostle Paul had to wrestle with this understanding in 1 Cor. 1:10-4:2 where he distinguishes between the wisdom of this world and the wisdom of God. The word of wisdom in 1 Cor. 12:8a is not referring to *sofia* per se, rather it refers to the utterance of the message that is being proclaimed with wisdom. Therefore, the *charisma* does not consist of wisdom as the content of the utterance but in the actual utterance of wisdom, which becomes a shared experienced because it results in the building up of the church.⁶¹ Archibald Robertson notes that, “the word of wisdom unravels the mysteries of God’s counsel and makes known the means of salvation.”⁶² This writer believes that since there is no any other place in the New Testament where this word is used, the word of wisdom may be the effective communication of the gospel that bring solution to human problems. The message of the gospel brings insight into a confuse situation and peace into the heart of those who receives it.

Word of Knowledge

The *gnosis* Paul was referring to is difficult to be determined. No one can actually say what Paul had in mind, but one can only speculate. Schatzman citing Bank in

⁶¹Schatzman, 35.

⁶²Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (Edinburgh& T Clark, 1963), 265.

Pauline Theology of Charismata sees *gnosis* as understanding the Old Testament, the Christian tradition and capacity to expand them correctly.⁶³ Fee observes *gnosis* as supernatural endowment of knowledge; factual information that could not otherwise have been known without the spirit aid such as frequently occurred in the prophetic tradition and is assumed to be true in the pagan prophetic oracles.⁶⁴ P. C Wagner describes this gift “as special ability to teach with knowledge. He sees those who have this gift as superior learner. They are expected to be among the first to discover the truth and to originate new ideas.”⁶⁵ Therefore, this gift is always attached to teaching and it is defined as special ability to discover, accumulate, analyze and clarify information and ideas that are pertinent to the growth and well being of the body of Christ.⁶⁶

Faith

When Paul named *pistis* as one of the *charismata* he did not have the saving faith in mind. That is, the faith an individual receives upon repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. The kind of faith Paul had in mind is the mountain moving faith (1Cor.13: 2; Mark 11:21ff.) This faith according to Archibald Robertson is charismatic faith that is faith that produces not only miracles but also martyrs.⁶⁷ J.D.G. Dunn says the charismatic faith may therefore denote a mysterious surge of confidence that God will grant a miracle or healing.⁶⁸ P.C. Wagner describes this gift as special ability to discern with extraordinary confidence the will and purpose of God for the future of his work.⁶⁹

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Fee, 166.

⁶⁵Wagner, 190.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Robertson, A. and Alfred Plummer, 265.

⁶⁸Dunn, 211.

James Moffat sees this gift as a heroic believe in the supernatural, an indomitable assurance that God can overcome any difficulties, and meet any emergencies⁷⁰. This writer submits that the gift of faith is the ability to trust God for supernatural miracles either in the areas of financial provision or in the areas of project execution where the believer just believe in his heart that God can do it.

Gifts of Healings

This is the only gift in all the Pauline list of gifts that carries Pauline unique expression *charismata*, which Paul may be using technically in order to avoid the tendency of regarding healing as an end in itself. In the New Testament, the gift of healing was very much pronounced especially in the ministry of Jesus and the apostles. This gift was seen as demonstration of power. In Acts 5: 15 the bible records that the shadow of Peter healed the sick. The point is that this sign was evident in the ministry of the early church. P.H. David citing Justin Martyr for instance writes that:

And now you may learn this from what goes on under your own eyes. Many of our Christian men have healed in the name of Jesus Christ who was crucified under Pontius Pilate numberless demoniac throughout the whole world and in your city, when all other exorcist and specialist in incantation and drug have failed, they have healed them and still do heal rendering the demon impotent and driving them out.⁷¹

From this statement from Justin Martyr, it was evident that the church fathers recognized the gift of healing in the church. In 1 Corinthians 12: 9 the gifts of healings (*charismata iamaton*) are pluralized which seems to mean many varieties of the gift for various kinds

⁶⁹Wagner, 140. Michael Green defines faith as special ability to trust God in the dark when all the odds are against you; the ability to hold on to God in prayer over many years for the conversion of some loved one without wavering. *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 202.

⁷⁰James Moffatt *The Bible: A New Translation* (New York: Harper & Bros, 1950), 181.

⁷¹P. H. David "Healing, Illness," *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Development* (Leicester, England: Intervarsity Press, 1997), 438

of illnesses. MacGorman posits that the plural *charismata iamatōn* is significant for at least two considerations:

One, the indefinite plural denies the notion of elevation to the status of a singular healer for all sicknesses. The gifts of healings are sovereignly bestowed upon some believers corresponding with illnesses present either in number or kind.

Two, these gifts are given for the benefit of the body of Christ. Therefore, this endowment was not designed to be demonstrative of power per se but authoritative ministry directed to others in the same venue that messianic healings were God's gracious healing activity through Jesus for those in need of healing.⁷² Wagner observes that "healing is a special ability God gives to certain member of the body of Christ to serve as human intermediary through whom it pleases God to cure illnesses and restore health apart from the use of natural and medical means."⁷³ Dunn says "to restrict this gift to physical diseases is not proper; the gift can also be used to cure mental, emotional and spiritual illnesses."⁷⁴ However this writer believes that these gifts are given to the church to restore health to people through the power of God in Christ Jesus.

The plural nature of the gifts indicates healing of various diseases, which suggests that every act of healing is a special gift of God. Apart from exercising one's spiritual gifts, healing may come through prayers and when faith is present the sick will be healed. Healing may also be achieved through obedience to the word of God (James 5:15-16) and through medication.

Working of Miracles

⁷²Macgorman, 38.

⁷³Wagner, 203.

⁷⁴Dunn, 168.

Some Scholars equate this gift with healing gift but they are not the same. Paul separates this gift from other gifts. This gift is a display of God's power to alter the ordinary cause of nature.⁷⁵ The gift may also be related to exorcising of demons as Green suggested.⁷⁶ The ἐνεργήματα and δυνάμεις are translated as powerful deeds or mighty works, which means any activity where the power of God is evident.⁷⁷ The operation of this gift may include deliverance from perils as in Acts 5:19-20 or Acts 28:3-6 or miraculous restoration of any lost part of the body⁷⁸.

Distinguishing between Spirits

διακρίσεις πνευμάτων, is translated to mean discernment of spirit or distinguishing of spirit. J.D.G Dunn translates this gift as evaluations of inspired utterances and links it closely to the preceding utterance of prophecy.⁷⁹ This writer sees Dunn's view as inadequate because distinguishing between Spirit is not restricted to evaluation of speech alone, it also includes evaluation of other gifts mentioned in 1Cor. 12:4ff whether they are genuine or counterfeit. In 1 Thess. 5:20-21 this gift is connected with prophecy. Paul mentioned the necessity of testing or proving all things that follow immediately after the exhortation⁸⁰ "do not treat prophecy with contempt." There is no

⁷⁵Ibid, 209.

⁷⁶Green, 178. Schatzmann refers to this gift as the power of overcoming evil through the saving power of God. He goes further to say that this gift is included in the nature miracle and concludes that these gifts are given by God to strengthen the church and caution should be exercised not to use this gift to draw attention to oneself or to make merchandise of it or to build empire around it. Max Turner, *Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gift Then and Now* (Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 1996), 249.

⁷⁷D.A. Carson, *Showing The Spirit: a Theological Exposition of 1Corinthians12-14* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1987), 65ff

⁷⁸Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England: Inter Varsity Press, 1985), 967.

⁷⁹Dunn, "Prophetic I Saying and the Jesus Tradition: The Importance of Testing Prophetic Utterances Within Early Christianity," *New Testament Studies* 24 (1978): 175.

⁸⁰Schatzman, 40.

disagreement as to the meaning of this gift for most scholars see this gift as ability to distinguish between the spirit of God and the spirit of the devil.⁸¹ Schatzmann says this gift is to test whether the gift manifested were from God, or from a demon source or whether it is just merely reflecting human opinion. This gift is important not only for the prophetic utterance but for all gifts⁸². Dunn however proposes three practical criteria of evaluation to show how these *charismata* should be expressed.

This writer believes that the criteria given by Dunn should be applied to other gifts. These criteria are:

1. The test of kerygmatic tradition, that is, does it exalt Jesus? 1 Cor. 12:3.
2. Test of character that is, does it manifest love?
3. Test of *οικοδομη* that is, does it build up the faith?⁸³

Once these criteria are in place then spiritual gifts will be a blessing to the community of faith. The gift of distinguishing of spirit is essential to the community of faith now that there are false teachers and prophets within and outside the church who are out to deceive and enslave members of the church. Therefore, the church should be able to discern and judge teachings that are false, judge prophecies that are demonic and discern which of these miraculous gifts are demonic or Holy Spirit inspired. The church should always bear in mind the words of the Lord Jesus that says, “by their fruit we shall know them.”

Different Kinds of Tongues

⁸¹Grudem,

⁸²Schatzman, 41.

⁸³Dunn, 177

This particular gift is obviously the most controversial gifts of all the gifts mentioned by Paul both in the first century and even nowadays.⁸⁴ Many books have been written about the gift of tongues because by far it has been the most difficult gift to explain. The difficulties lie in whether the gift is the same as the gift of speaking in tongues on the day of Pentecost or is it another *charismata* or the initial evidence of Spirit baptism. The debate on this issue has separated the body of Christ into two camps, but fortunately, the doctrine of “initial evidence” is not held as severely as it was in time past. It seems the body of Christ has come of age and the issue of tongue is no longer a spectacular thing as it was in the day gone by especially when the gift is seen as the initial physical evidence of spirit baptism.⁸⁵

There is no doubt *glossolalia* was one of the major problem in the Corinthian church where it was regarded as an expressway of communicating with God. Aside it was also listed as one of the supreme manifestations of the spirit at the expense of other *charismata*. In order to correct this anomaly Paul had to devote most of his time to explaining the function of these gifts for the benefit of all. What was paramount in the heart of Paul was the unity of the body. Paul did not want anything to hinder the flow of God’s Spirit among the churches. Likewise he did not want any spiritual gift to cause disaffection among the brethren.

What is γένη γλωσσῶν, in Paul’s mind? Various scholars have interpreted this gift yet efforts are still ongoing to actually get into what Paul had in mind. Among this interpretation is that Paul thought of tongues as speaking in other languages.⁸⁶ Others see

⁸⁴Fee, *Empowering Presence* 172

⁸⁵H.I. Lederle, *Treasures Old and New: Interpretations of Spirit- Baptism in the Charismatic Renewal Movement* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988), 213.

⁸⁶Johannes Behm, "γλωσσῶν" *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1: 720

tongue as the unbroken speech in religious ecstasy, which was therefore unintelligible.⁸⁷ Dunn says it is wrong to identify this gift with the earthly language. He therefore contends that the tongues of men in 1 Cor.13: 1 are inspired speech and in contrast with angelic tongues speech Paul refers to in 1 Cor. 14:1ff. Also he posits that tongue speaking is “mysteries” that is an eschatological secret which only God understand so tongue speaking is heavenly language.⁸⁸

This gift is identified with prayer, which they refer to as “praying language.”⁸⁹ Green sees tongues as the ability to speak in a language that the speaker has not learnt, that he does not understand and that is incomprehensible to the hearer.⁹⁰ Wagner defines this gift, as the ability to speak to God in a language that one has never learned, or the ability to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to his people through a divinely anointed utterance in a language one has never learned.⁹¹ This writer believes that the gift of different kind of tongues is an enabling grace to speak to God in an unknown tongue in private devotion and thus builds up one’s spiritual life. The speaking in tongues that the one hundred and twenty disciples spoke on the day of Pentecost was not a gift per se but God’s supernatural manifestation of his presence in order to confirm that the resurrected Jesus has been glorified. Concerning the use of tongues in the Corinthian church, Paul did not react to the abuse but rather taught them the more excellent way to use this gift for the common good of the church. To Paul, *glossolalia* is

⁸⁷Schatzman, 42.

⁸⁸Dunn, 243.

⁸⁹Paul Yonggi Cho, *The Holy Spirit My Senior Partner* (Seoul, Korea: Full Gospel Press, 1989), 33.

⁹⁰Green, 162.

⁹¹Wagner, 210, Turner, 231-233. says in Paul’s view the *γλωσσαι* are languages not merely shout and pre-cognitive mumbblings.

God's enabling grace which must not be discarded but which must be rechanneled for the edification of the person speaking. To Paul, tongues speaking are not directly for the upbuilding of the church (it cannot be used for teaching or preaching or counseling) but for self-edification, therefore in the worship service it is irrelevant, unprofitable and unbeneficial to speak in tongues except it is interpreted. The writer agrees with Turner's conclusion that the gift of tongues to Paul is for use in private prayer and praise and also as a means of communication of the inner groaning and longings, which the person could not put into words of his or her own.⁹²

Interpretation of Tongues

This gift is the ability to interpret or make known in clear terms the language spoken in an unknown tongue.⁹³ The person speaking in an unknown tongue should be able to interpret what is being said in tongues or someone in the congregation may do and that will edify the church. This gift may be identified with prophecy yet there are still differences. The difference is that prophecy is God's revelation addressed to a person(s) in their need, whereas the gift of interpretation of tongues is the intelligible communication of *glossolalic* utterance addressed to God.⁹⁴

Behm states that "the meaning of the noun ἐρμηνεία is not translation as in the case of foreign language but interpretation or explanation."⁹⁵ When this gift is in the church it makes the gift of tongues valuable because the interpreted tongues will edify

⁹²Turner, 233.

⁹³Green, 166.

⁹⁴Schatzman, 43

⁹⁵Behm, "ἐρμηνε" *TDNT*, 2 (1964): 665

the whole congregation. However there must be no speaking in tongue in the church if there is no life of every believer and the baptism occurs at salvation.

Paul's conclusion on this matter is seen in its constant repetition in vs 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 of their single divine source which suggests that their attainment should not be the subject of rivalry or jealousy for the divine distribution is as God determines.⁹⁶

THE EFFECT OF *CHARISMATA*

12:11 πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἐνεργεῖ τὸ ἓν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα διαιροῦν ἰδίᾳ ἑκάστῳ καθὼς βούλεται

But all these work the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will.

The πάντα is very emphatic and the δὲ is a postpositive conjunction that marks the contrast of transition from the manifold gifts and powers to the one Source of them all. This Source is the Spirit of God; so that there is no contradiction between the previous verse 6 and 10. Paul emphasized the fact that it is the same Spirit of God who is at work in every believer to do all these things, the singular ἓν and the particular pronoun αὐτο emphasize the Spirit of God as energizes all these spiritual manifestations in their collective whole according to the Spirit intent and purpose.⁹⁷ Fowler notes that “the will of God is always the self-revelatory expression of Himself in Christ.” The singular and unified self-revelation of God's Spirit in the believers are expressed in a multiplicity of unique manifestations in individual Christians.”⁹⁸ Fowler, therefore conclusively notes that “the divine expressions are not procedural or planned, but are expressed as He

⁹⁶Paul W. Marsh “1 Corinthians” *New International Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapid, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979) 1375.

⁹⁷Fowler “*Charismata: Rethinking the so-called "Spiritual Gifts"* e-book, 1999

⁹⁸Ibid

sovereignly determines.” Looking at the word διαιροῦν from Greek perspectives it may be misinterpreted to mean a commodity which could be possessed or controlled by the recipients. But in actual sense, it means to divide or distribute the function (that is the distribution or division) is sovereignly determined by the Lord. The etymological meaning of the word δια means “through” and αἰρομαι (haireomai) means “to choose” (cf. vs 4-6), so, a more consistent meaning might be that "the Spirit energizes all grace-expressions, choosing to work through each individual Christian according to His own divine deliberations.⁹⁹ The church comprises of people who are variously endowed with the gifts of the Spirit to benefit the whole community of faith.

CONCLUSION

Charismata are an important subject in First Corinthians. Unfortunately, the subject is not taken serious by the mainline churches today. When some churches are nominating officers to serve in the Church, less consideration is given to the individual gifting before the nomination is made. As a matter of fact, some of the offices in the church have been politicized to the extent that the church does not look at the spiritual quality of those being nominated but rather at the physical achievements of these persons in the church or in the community. For example, someone who is not gifted in counseling should not be nominated as the chairman of counseling committee and those who do not have the gift of service or helps should not be ordained as deacons in the church. All officers in the church should be appointed based on their calling and gifts and not on their influence, wealth or secular positions. In the church the Christians have been endowed with diverse spiritual gifts with which to function in God’s service. These gifts

⁹⁹See Rogers and Rogers *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament* 377-378.

when put in to practice will make the work of God easier and interesting, thus making the Christian service worthwhile.

The Christian service is a service that entails absolute humility and self-denial, a service that is devoid of competition and rivalry but complement the effort of others within the framework of the community of faith. It is not a political office but sacred service to God and humanity. It is a service that forms an integral part of Christian discipleship. Church ministry should be complimentary and not competitive; therefore the following exegetical findings should be noted:

1. Every gift is God given. The manifestations of the Spirit are distributed to each member of the body of Christ severally as He wills. Paul says in 1Corinthians 12:11 “But the same spirit works all these things distributing to each one severally as He wills.”
2. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the common good of all
1Corinthians 12:7 says; “But the manifestation of the spirit is given for the common good of all.”
3. The Spiritual gifts should be used in a way to complement one another in the work of the master. Therefore there should be no room for comparison, jealousy, or envying one another. The spiritual gifts should be demonstrated in love.
4. All gifts are equal. No gifts should be seen as superior to the other. None of the gifts should be given undue attention over and above the others. All gifts should be treated the same.
5. In God’s service to whom much is given from him much is expected, therefore every gift will be accounted for at the judgment seat of Christ.
6. The spiritual gifts are to unite the body of Christ together and not to divide them
7. The spiritual gifts are given for equipping, edifying and preparing Christians for the work of the ministry.

8. No one should be redundant in the vineyard of the Lord. Every Christian has one gift or more deposited in him or her at salvation.
9. Every Christian should be active in God's service. It will be unwise to assume that because someone exercises a spectacular gift that person is more spiritual than one who has less spectacular gift. Furthermore, possessing a gift does not mean that God approves of all a person does or teaches. Spiritual gift must not be confused with the fruit of the spirit, which relates more directly to Christian character and holiness.

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