

I. The Holy Spirit Gives Faith in Christ

*The Holy Spirit is about Faith and Gifts of Grace not just “Spirituality”*

Paul’s letter to the Corinthians was in part answering \_\_\_\_\_ the Christians in Corinth had written to Paul for advice. For the topic of chapters 12-14 Paul begins,

*“Now concerning spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ ...”* (Dr. Lockwood’s translation)

Even though many English Bible translations interpret verses 1 and 4 “spiritual gifts” and “gifts” as if the Greek text were the same, that is not true.

Verse 1 = *spiritual things* = the topic the Corinthians asked about

Verse 4 = *gifts of \_\_\_\_\_* = Paul’s term for the Holy Spirit’s specific free gifts to the Church to edify the Church

One difference between the meanings that Paul wants to make clear.

*“Spiritual things” and “spirituality” in Corinth was used to mean who gets what, and who is better than the other person. It’s all about me.*

*Paul taught, no, it’s all about Jesus and His people, the Church.*

vs 2 – Without the Holy Spirit the people worship \_\_\_\_\_ idols.

vs 3 – With the Holy Spirit the Christian can never say, “Jesus be \_\_\_\_\_.”

Instead, the Holy Spirit leads a person to say “Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_.”

Number One – A Christian’s “spirituality” is always in regards that “Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_.”

## II. Gifts of Grace to Benefit God's People

vs 4 - The variety of gifts of \_\_\_\_\_ are all given by the same Holy Spirit.

vs 7 - Therefore the gifts cannot be used against people but for the \_\_\_\_\_ good.

The verb is *present* not *past* action in verse 7, Paul wrote "*is being given*" not "*is given.*"

The Holy Spirit constantly and \_\_\_\_\_ works in the life of the Christian.

Number Two – The variety of gifts are given by the one Holy Spirit as \_\_\_\_\_ wills for the \_\_\_\_\_ good.

The Holy Spirit gives different tools to build God's Church, when and where as He determines is needed.

### Reflections We Need Today:

1. Christianity is not a self-directed, generic spirituality so that everyone decides for himself or herself what is good religion or bad religion. That approach is idol worship like the people of Corinth followed, before they believed in Jesus. For Christians, "spiritual things", "spirituality" and "religion" is first and foremost the Holy Spirit giving faith in Jesus Christ above all things. Jesus is Lord!

2. Christian living is not a measure of me, nor measures what I can do. It is not my personal spirituality to measure how good I am. Christian living is empowered by the Holy Spirit, who everyday gives gifts of grace as He wills to benefit the whole Church – the common good. The Christian is empowered by the Holy Spirit to see and do what others in the Church need to be done.

3. Only once number 1 and 2 are understood and believed can specific spiritual gifts be considered.

## Sermon Series on 1 Corinthians Chapter 12-15

January 16 – February 20, 2022

### Sermon 1 – “The Holy Spirit Gives Faith and Gifts of Grace to Build the Church”

*Note: The assigned Epistle Readings for the six Sunday, January 16 – February 20 are all from 1 Corinthians chapters 12-15. The sermons during this time will be focused on St. Paul’s teaching in those chapters.*

Background Information:

#### **The City of Corinth: Geography and History**

Corinth is situated on the narrow isthmus (four and a half miles wide) that links the Greek mainland in the north to the Peloponnese peninsula in the south (where ancient Sparta was located). The city possessed strategic advantages, with its citadel, the Acrocorinth, rising to 1,886 feet (575 meters) above sea level, and economic advantages through its position as a gateway between northern and southern Greece, and between the Corinthian Gulf to the west and the Saronic Gulf to the east. It possessed two harbors, Lechaem (facing Italy) and Cenchreae (facing Asia). Rather than transporting goods by the dangerous route around the southern tip of Achaia, merchants could have smaller ships placed on wheeled platforms and dragged across the isthmus along a kind of tramway called a δίολκος (from διέλκω, “to drag through”). The customs duties levied on this trade contributed greatly to the city’s wealth. Its fertile hinterland also contributed to Corinth’s prosperity; indeed, our word “currant” derives from the name “Corinth.”

In 146 B.C. the Roman consul Lucius Mummius razed the city to the ground, as a reprisal for Corinth leading the other Achaean cities in revolt. For more than a century the city lay dormant, until Julius Caesar rebuilt it in 44 B.C., and named the new city *Colonia Laus Julia Corinthiensis* (“the colony of Corinth gives praise to Julius”). Corinth swiftly regained and exceeded its former prominence, becoming the largest city in Roman Greece and attaining a population of approximately 100,000. During the reign of Augustus (27 B.C.–14 A.D.) it was adorned with numerous public buildings.<sup>1</sup> The city also resumed its role as host of the biennial Isthmian games conducted at the nearby sanctuary of Poseidon. It became an important center of Roman culture (*Romanitas*); prominent citizens from neighboring towns coveted magistracies in the city and became its benefactors. Latin became the official language. By 27 B.C. Corinth had clearly been reinstated as capital of the senatorial province of Achaia, an honor which may have been restored as early as 44 B.C. Thus it is the provincial proconsul, Gallio, who hears the case brought against Paul before the Corinthian βῆμα, “judgment seat” (Acts 18:12–16). Along with Gallio and other civil and military officers, the new city was settled by ex-soldiers and freedmen from Rome, an influx of people from neighboring areas, and numerous slaves.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Gregory J. Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis: Concordia Pub. “No House, 2000), 4–5.