

# 1 Corinthians

## Chapter 1

7-So that you are not lacking in any spiritual gifts, as you eagerly await the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>1</sup>.

8-He will strengthen you to the end blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Many sincere and hungry people in the church are at a standstill when it comes to operating in the gifts of the Spirit. They know that they are to desire the spiritual gifts, and especially prophecy, but they don't understand how to begin (1 Corinthians 14:1). In many instances we observe one of two extremes: either people are so zealous that they step out in their own desire and make a mess of things, or people don't step out at all in fear of doing something wrong. What we all must come to realize is that God has made the gifts of the Spirit purely relational. The deeper we move into relationship with the Holy Spirit, the deeper we will be affected by the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

The gifts of the Spirit flow out of our interaction with God and our obedience to do the things that we know to do. This of course all begins when we are baptized in the Holy Ghost according to Acts 1:8 and Acts 2:4. There are four training grounds where we learn to more effectively function in the gifts of the Spirit:

- 1- Giving ourselves to the study of the word of God.
- 2- Giving ourselves to prayer that touches the realms of glory (too many pray prayers that are like reading a message off a piece of paper, instead of talking to the Father from the heart).
- 3- Allowing a deeper participation in praise and worship.
- 4- Doing those things that you know the word of God has commanded, such as speaking to others about their souls.

When we are participating in these spiritual things, we discover the inspirations of the Holy Spirit that lead us into a deeper and more diversified manifestation of the gifts.

Many times I have been worshipping the Lord and suddenly have a vision. I was not asking for it or thinking about functioning in the gifts, but as I was caught away with singing and enjoying the presence of the Lord, the Holy Spirit gave me something to do. For me the vision always results in a word a knowledge, which then leads to a miracle or a healing. I have watched as others have been caught away during worship - and suddenly they realize that their pain was gone, or their deaf ear could hear, or some other supernatural touch from heaven had affected their spirit or body. One example of how far these inspirations are from our own thinking and understanding took place in a pastors and leaders meeting that I was ministering in. As I was preaching, my eyes were drawn towards a pastor that I had some issues with; and suddenly the word of the Lord came to me for this person. As my heart was being flooded with this word of greatness and encouragement for this precious man of God, I was thinking how can this be? I refrained from saying anything for a while, and then after being continually compelled by the Spirit, delivered the word to this pastor whom I had misjudged.

Flowing in the gifts must be left in the realm of relationship, and the strong compelling inspirations of the Holy Ghost. The deeper we will let our affections and emotions go into our love relationship with the Lord Jesus, the stronger the unctions of the Spirit will be. The same way that peace and joy come is the same way that prophesy and visions also come. If our thoughts are caught away with how to function in the gifts, and trying to get a prophecy, nothing good will come of it; but when we simply allow the things of the Spirit (like prayer and praise) to carry us away into affection towards God, the river of God's inspirations will flood our hearts. One of the greatest ways to begin to experience the Holy Spirit speaking through you is to involve yourself in reaching the lost. If you will step out in obedience and faith to see the miracle of salvation come to those whom you come in contact with, you will step into a realm where all the gifts of God will function through you. It is the will of God that the manifestation of the Spirit function in each person's life in the context of the church as well - so begin to give yourself to a deeper participation, so that there may be a more glorious manifestation of Jesus in your life! (1 Corinthians 12:7).

<sup>2</sup> One of the great wonders of salvation is that the blood of Jesus and the work of the Spirit have made us blameless (Colossians 1:21-22). The Greek word 'babaiois', translated "strengthen," means "standing firm on the feet, maintaining firmness or solidity, steadfast." (Theological dictionary of the New Testament, 1964-1976, Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich, Vol. 10). Paul is telling us that the one who has made us

9 Through the faithfulness of God we were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord<sup>3</sup>.

10- Now I urge you brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you but be joined together in the same mind and purpose<sup>4</sup>.

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blameless remains committed to ensuring that we stand firm in His grace. Our Savior has washed us and cleansed us from our sins, removing every offensive thing. "Blameless" is a powerful word; here it refers to being without the stain of sin ('anegkletos'). Whereas in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 "blameless" refers to being without spot or blemish ('amemptos'). The blood has washed us and loosed us from our sins so that we are without fault before Him. Our spirits and souls which were stained and marred with iniquity have been made whiter than snow (Revelation 1:5; 3:18; Isaiah 1:18). Looking unto the author and finisher of our faith - who has made our whole spirit, soul, and body blameless - secures our place of being continually kept by the power of God (1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Peter 1:5).

The work of Christ Jesus functions in our life, and produces faith and assurance as a sure and steadfast anchor for our soul (Hebrews 6:19; 10:19-21). Christ Jesus, our only mediator, is at work interceding on our behalf and upholding us with the word of His power. It is essential that we hold fast to our confidence in Him and His saving work of grace that has made us partakers of His divine nature: this is the faith! (Hebrews 3:6,14; 10:35; Ephesians 3:12; Romans 8:17). It cannot be overemphasized that we have been established together in Christ. Our life is in Him, and our perspective cannot be allowed to drift away from that unification (John 15:1-5). In Christ Jesus, God is maturing us; and in Him God is both doing and willing of His good pleasure in us. The power of God is at work in us so long as we remain yielded and dependent on Jesus (2 Corinthians 1:21; Philippians 2:13; Ephesians 4:20-21). It is Jesus who will strengthen us and will keep us firm until the end - if we will continue to believe in Him and not ourselves.

<sup>3</sup> God has brought us into a divine and sacred partnership with His Son. The Almighty God has poured out the sacred anointing oil upon us and anointed us "sons of God" (John 1:12; 1 John 3:1; 2:20, 27). The anointing transferred upon our lives the authority and power to have all things in common with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (John 17:21-22; Colossians 1:28; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Philippians 1:21; Ephesians 5:30; John 15:4; Galatians 2:20). We were called and chosen by God to be conformed to the image of His Son. To be heirs and joint heirs with Him and to be seated together in the place of authority with Him in the realm of the heavenlies from where all power and rights proceed (Romans 8:17-29). We are God's representatives in the earth ordained to carry out the divine work of His Son. We have been honored with the sacred privilege of representing God as those who have His nature and spiritual likeness (Ephesians 4:24; Romans 8:30; 2 Corinthians 3:6; 5:20; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; 1 John 1:3; John 20:21; 2 Corinthians 6:1).

It is through the act of God's faith or faithfulness that we have become sons. It is through His continual faithfulness to us that we are given the grace to be empowered to develop into all that He has purposed us to be in Christ Jesus. God is at work in us to develop us into the full spiritual maturity of His Son Christ Jesus (Ephesians 4:13; Philippians 1:6; 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; 2 Corinthians 3:5; 9:8). To this rest assure that all who have thoroughly studied the word of God agree that we have been called into a sacred participation in Christ's Sonship. We may also be assured that God is trustworthy and we can count on Him to provide all that we need to accomplish all that He has purposed!

<sup>4</sup> If the church is going to function as the members of Christ and the community of God then we are going to have to be willing to both speak and live by the word of God. We should be willing to come to such a place of surrender to the Holy Spirit that our own personal judgments are no longer important. If we would be willing to live in such unity of the Spirit and surrender to the love of Christ then surely all men would have a witness that we are His disciples (John 13:34-35). By glorifying God with one mind and with one mouth we would show out of our love and affection for one another that Christ has risen from the dead and that we have passed from death unto life (Romans 15:6; 1 John 3:14). However, if we continue to give place to strife and division then we will continue to be overrun by the powers of darkness and the glory of the church will lie in ruins (Romans 13:13; 1 Corinthians 3:3; Galatians 5:20; Philippians 2:3; 1 Timothy 6:4; James 3:14-16). Ultimately, through envying and divisions we would tear at each other and bite and devour one another until there was nothing left. Therefore, let all of us consecrate ourselves to living according to the word of God and the ways of the Spirit so that all the world might see the glory of Jesus and the blessed hope of the Kingdom of God.

18 The word of the cross<sup>5</sup> is foolish to the perishing but to those of us who are saved- the power of God<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> The cross both displays the wisdom and power of God and is the means by which we access the wisdom and power of God. The Jews expected that the Messiah the King would be exalted upon a throne and rule over all of the earth forever but instead He was exalted upon a cross (John 12:32). This was probably the most offensive subject that Paul could take up to argue for the glory and Messiahship of Jesus. To the Jewish mind everyone who hung upon a tree was cursed (Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13). Yet, Paul boasted in the relationship of the cross to the King of Kings. The world in its arrogance and pride cannot begin to relate to the humility and obedience of the cross. Yet, if we are going to come to know the ways of the Almighty humility is an absolute. The very nature and way of the Eternal God is humility and if we are going to walk with Him and conduct ourselves in the manner of His life then we must learn to be obedient to His conduct and manner of life. Jesus came and revealed the Father and invited all of us to come and learn of Him (Mathew 11:29-30; Mark 10:43-45; John 14:9). The obedience of Christ was completed in His obedience unto death even the death of the cross (Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 2:10). In fact, the whole of the life of Jesus may be cast upon the cross for the cross represents His obedience, His servitude and His humility. We are commanded to live out this same kind of life and take up the cross of the obedience Christ found in His servitude and humility (Philippians 2: 6-8; Matthew 11:29; 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 14:27; Matthew 10:38; Luke 14:27; 2 Corinthians 2:5).

It was at the cross that every testimony that was given against mankind was put to death and erased forever (Colossians 2:14). It is the cross where the altar of God was prepared so that the Passover Lamb could become our sin offering and liberate us for the snare of iniquity and eternal death (1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 13:10-13; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24). At the cross every principality and power was defected and rendered utterly powerless to execute their will over those who would believe (John 12:31; Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14; 2 Timothy 1:10). Through the blood of the cross we received the cleansing and empowerment to step into the Holies of Holies and behold the Lord in all of His glory (Hebrews 10:19; Colossians 1:20). It was through the cross that everything in heaven and earth were cleansed (Colossians 1:20; Hebrews 9:23; 12:22-24). It was through the cross that the separation between Jew and Gentile was abolished (Ephesians 2:16). It was at the cross that God gave us His most precious gift: the death of His Son (John 3:16; Romans 8:32). Now that we have been purchased by the blood and sealed by the Spirit we should in like manner lay our life down for the brethren (1 John 3:16).

<sup>6</sup> The one thing that represents the Gospel of Jesus Christ more than anything else is the cross. We must recognize that when we speak of the cross of Christ, we are referring to that altar on which the blood of Jesus was offered (Hebrews 13:10-13). What was purchased for us on the cross was purchased by His shed blood. The preaching of the cross is the power of God and the power of the New Covenant, because it is where the blood of Jesus was supplied. It does not matter who you are, whether you are a Jew or a Gentile, there is only one way to be changed and brought into relationship with God; and that is through the cross of Christ (Ephesians 2:16). If this redeeming work is emphasized, if Christ Jesus is lifted up in those things which we proclaim, then all men will be drawn to Him (John 12:32). The authority of the cross is seen in our lives because we are crucified with Him. By the miracle of salvation, His death became our death - so that His life might be our life. The blood of the cross has become our testimony of a redeemed and transformed life. It is the token of our death and our new life that we now live by the power that is in His blood.

In the cross we see how Father feels about sin and we understand His demand that it be put to death. At the cross where the bread of life was broken and the cup of communion was supplied, the veil between earth and heaven was ripped in two, and all who would believe were invited to come and step inside (Hebrews 10:19-20; Luke 23:45). It was at the cross that the fountain of redeeming blood was poured out to supply a cleansing: now and forever for all who put their trust in Him. Who can begin to comprehend the travail of Father's heart at the sufferings of Jesus on the cross, and also His ecstatic joy that redemption's price had paid for our access back to Him? (Isaiah 53:10). It is through the cross that we can comprehend how desperately God loves us, for it is here that He gave His Only Begotten Son so that if anyone would believe, they could be saved. In knowing that He did not spare His own Son in order to redeem us, we can be certain that He will continue to do for us what no other power can do (Romans 8:32). It is in the cross that we should gain great confidence with God; for here we were released from everything that could stop the abundance of God's blessings, authority, and dominion in our life. Therefore we may boldly proclaim, "If God be for us, who can be against us?!"

## Chapter 2

2 For I have determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified<sup>7</sup>.

12 But we have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit of God that we may know what has been bestowed to us by God<sup>8</sup>.

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Through treasuring the cross and laying down our lives, God's glory is revealed. If we are to follow Him in all of His power and authority, then we must deny ourselves so that the life Christ Jesus might be seen. The great exchange took place on Calvary's hill: Christ Jesus took our place to die for all our sins, so that we might take His place in standing before men with all heaven's glory and authority (John 1:16; 17:21-23). Our confession and manner of life must be: "I am crucified with Christ; and Christ now lives, not me" (Galatians 2:20). Our judgment must be just and reasonable, that if Christ Jesus died for all, then all are dead - that we should from this time forth only live for Him (2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Romans 6:3-4; 12:2). When we live for Him, then it is that same Jesus who will be seen: the One who caused the blind to see, who lived in oneness with the Father in unlimited glory.

<sup>7</sup> Many people have different ideas about what is good and what is bad. About what we should emphasize and what we should avoid. However, what we are called to do is to follow Jesus (Matthew 4:19; 8:22; 9:9; 16:24; 19:21; John 10:27; 12:26). If Jesus said to do it then there is a blessing in it. All that Jesus showed us was the wonderful ways of the Father (John 14:9). He made it very clear that all that He did was what the Father showed Him to do (John 5:20; 8:28; 10:38). Jesus said that no one knows the Father but the Son and whosoever the Son will reveal Him to (Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22). Jesus is the only way to the Father (John 14:6). If we want to live in the abundant life, which is the eternal life then we must be willing to do what He said for us to do (Matthew 7:21; 12:50).

The right thing to do is to recognize that all of the gospel is about Jesus. When we know Jesus we know all the fullness of God for it pleased God that all the fullness of the Deity should dwell in Him (Colossians 2:9-10). Everything that the Holy Spirit is doing is about revealing Jesus and making Him known (John 16:13-15). It is Jesus who redeemed our life from destruction and crowned us with lovingkindness and tender mercies (Psalms 103:4). If our heart is right then all we should desire is to know Him (Ephesians 1:17; Philippians 3:8-10). Let us determine that in everything we desire and purpose to do it will be about Jesus. Discover that in Him is all wisdom and power. That our whole life is about bringing glory and honor to the One who loved us so much that He gave His life to ransom us from sin and death. Let us lay all other things aside and realize that it is all about knowing Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> We have God's Spirit in us! Someone in whom the Spirit of God may be found is certainly to be recognized with insight and wisdom that is not earthly even as Joseph was in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon (Genesis 41:38; Daniel 4:8,9,18, 5:11,14). In the Old Testament the Spirit of God came upon men such as Gideon and Samson who were given extraordinary abilities of power and strength (Judges 6:34; Judges 15:14). The Spirit of God would bestow the abilities to be skillful in the arts and all kinds of workmanship as was granted to Bezaleel (Exodus 31:1-5). Those in the Old Testament were given divine ability to be priest, prophets, kings and mighty men all by the Spirit of God.

When we were born of God He not only gave us a new spirit and a new heart but He put His Spirit in us and gave us the divine ability to be sons of God (Ezekiel 36:26; John 1:12; 3:6). The Spirit of the living God is dwelling in us right now, at this very moment (1 Corinthians 3:16; Romans 8:9). When we consider the reality that we have the Spirit of God then certainly we must recognize that there is nothing outside of our reach (Philippians 4:13; Ephesians 3:19; 6:10). The wisdom and knowledge of God reaches beyond all the abilities and insights of mankind. God's strength and His power knows no limitations. All we have to do is to be willing to be lead and directed by the Spirit of God and the things of God will be known to us and revealed in our lives (Romans 8:1, 14, 1 Corinthians 2:14; Galatians 5:25; 2 Corinthians 3:3). How do we find this walk? How do we learn to give ourselves over to the direction and guidance of the Spirit of God? It is actually very simple all we must do is to obey the word of God. God's word is our wisdom and our knowledge. It is the power that created the Universe. It is living and working mightily in those who believe. As we will walk in simple obedience to the word of God we will discover ourselves taken over by the direction and guidance of the Spirit of God. If we are going to enjoy all the blessings that He has blessed us with and all the power and authority that He has vested in us then we must understand

13 And which we speak not in words teaching man's wisdom but the teaching of the Holy Ghost connecting the spiritual to the spiritual<sup>9</sup>.

14 But the natural man<sup>10</sup> cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolish to him and he is not able to understand because they are spiritually<sup>11</sup> discerned.

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that it all begins with simple obedience to His word. The Spirit of God will lead us and guide us into all the truth and it is God's word that is truth. It is the life and person of Jesus that is truth. Many people recognize that it is important to speak by the Spirit but it is equally important to speak according to the word. It is also essential that we walk in the Spirit and be led by the Spirit but it is equally essential that we walk in the word and are led by the word. For even as Jesus, who is the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit, who has brought to us the Spirit of God, are one and will always agree even so the leading of the Spirit will always agree with the word of God. In fact, the work of the Holy Spirit is to reveal Jesus who is the Word made flesh and it is also the work of the Spirit to reveal the word of God that instructs us in all the will of God for our lives (2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Ephesians 4:15; Romans 10:8, 17; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 1:13; 5:26; 6:17; Philippians 2:16; Colossians 1:5; 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23, 25; 2:2).

<sup>9</sup> Everything that the Holy Spirit teaches is spiritual and what men teach is carnal. The Holy Spirit stands in a heavenly realm to make known to us all that the Father is doing. The Holy Spirit reveals what is going on in heaven while men teach their perception of what they think is going on in earth. Each one of us then stand in a place of decision as to what we are going to believe. The pressures are great to believe the physical evidence that we see with our eyes rather than the spiritual evidence that God has sworn with an oath and cannot lie. We were born of the Spirit so that we can be taught of God not men. There should be a whole new set of spiritual laws that we live by instead of natural laws. The word of God and the Spirit of God define for us a whole new reality. Yet many remain content to both think the same way and function the same as they did before they were born of the Spirit. They have submitted to the pressures that men have imposed upon them to expect the same things that the rest of the world expects. If the doctor, lawyer or financial expert says it so then that is what they believe. Failing to realize that we are not of this world and that we have been given authority to speak to the mountains to be removed and call into existence those things that God has spoken (John 14:17; 15:19; 17:14,16,25). The spiritual language, the spiritual songs and the spiritual understanding are unacceptable to a world governed by the mind of men.

The world and the natural thinking of men cannot receive the things of the Spirit. There is no connection between man and God through the natural realm and natural thinking. The connection to God and to the faith that He has given comes only by the Holy Spirit who has come to teach us how to participate with the kingdom of heaven. The Spirit of God causes us to understand the word of God and empowers us to believe that the impossible is possible. The Holy Spirit will make no connection with your doubt and unbelief. He will not agree with fear and disappointment. He will not be limited to the laws of nature or the understanding of men. Instead He will teach us to believe the word of God not the opinions of men (John 15:6; 1 Peter 1:24; Isaiah 40:6-8). A connection has been made to the realms of God's eternal glory and His supernatural provision the Holy Spirit has come to show us the life and authority of Jesus who lives within (John 16:13-15; 1 Corinthians 6:16; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Colossians 1:27; 1 John 4:4; Colossians 3:16).

<sup>10</sup> There is the rational and logical understanding of the world that we all live in that is based on natural laws. Within this world of the natural, many things are left to luck and chance - because they go beyond that which anyone can control. It is within the confines of this reality that men operate. The natural mind which is governed by natural laws (and then the pursuit to control things by one's own abilities) cannot participate with God's provision. The natural mind, ruled by what is observed only with the senses, shuts out submission to God's promises and reliance upon the miraculous. The power of faith that brings into existence things that do not exist is absolute foolishness to the natural mind. Men therefore become governed by what the arm of flesh can provide; and cannot look beyond what the eye can see, the ear can hear, and the heart can understand. They are not submitted to the laws of the Spirit, but the laws of nature. They cannot submit to the thinking of the Spirit and the mind of Christ, because they are dominated by circumstances and self-reliance.

The realm of the Spirit is a spiritual reality that is superior to all things natural. The spiritual is under the direct and absolute command of God, where nothing is uncertain and nothing is left to chance or luck. We cannot understand this realm based upon our observation and understanding of natural laws. The realm of the spiritual can only be understood by the word of God. The realm of the spiritual can only be taught to us

## 15- He that is spiritual<sup>12</sup> judges all but he himself is judged of none.

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by God the Holy Spirit, who leads and guides us into all truth. Natural laws do not dominate in the realm of the spiritual, rather it is governed by those things that God has proclaimed. As the worlds were created by the word of God, even so all that we have need of is provided by the same word. The only way possible to begin to receive the reality of these things is to live by the word and be led by the Holy Spirit (Romans 10:8,17; Psalm 119:160; 138:2; 1 Peter 1:23-25). Our hearts are united to walk with God because we are born of the Spirit, and given a new spirit and a new heart - to see what eyes have never seen, and hear what ears have never heard, and understand with our hearts those things that can only be taught by Holy Spirit (John 6:45; 16:13-15; 1 John 2:27). It is time that we all come under the laws of the Spirit of life and live by the word or God. Begin to move mountains, set new courses for the people around you, cast out devils, raise the dead, walk on water, and fellowship with God!

<sup>11</sup> Paul introduces a word in this verse that he will ultimately set everyone's attention on as a focal point for that which should be craved by the saints (1 Corinthians 14:1). The concept that he introduces is the spiritual (pneumatikos). He reveals to us that this is the realm opposite to the natural (psuchikos). The spiritual realm is the realm in which God lives. It is the eternal realm from which all of the things that God possesses flows. The spiritual (pneumatikos) is far more than "spiritual gifts" for it is from this realm that the spiritual gifts and every other spiritual revelation and manifestation of the character and power of God comes from. It is the realm of purity and everlasting joy, it is the realm of revelation and miracles. It is the realm where we interact with God in the heavenlies. The natural (psuchikos) is purely earthy whereas the spiritual (pneumatikos) is purely heavenly (1 Corinthians 15:44, 46). There are many people who have been born of the Spirit who remain unwilling to function in this realm where the Spirit would lead and guide us into everything that is heavenly. A realm where mountains are moved and the supernatural is an everyday reality. It is the realm of the overcomer, of those who walk and live in the Spirit, the realm of the unseen (2 Corinthians 4:18; Romans 8:6 Hebrews 11:1,3). We were born into an earthly realm (psuchikos) full of earthly limitations a realm that is not necessarily evil but one that is confined to human ability. The Lord Jesus opened the door for all mankind to leave this realm of human ability and step over into a place of the unlimited and unrestricted place of the spiritual (pneumatikos). When Abraham attempted to produce the desire and plan of God for his life with Hagar it was limited by the inability and effort of the human realm. As such it was likened unto Mount Sinai the place of bondage (Galatians 4:25). But when Abraham and Sarah no longer could rely on human ability because there was no more strength within their selves then God work a miracle by His Spirit and brought about that which the natural man and the natural mind cannot conceive. Likewise those who rely on the Spirit belong to a spiritual and heavenly realm the New Jerusalem (Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 21:10) Those who walk in the flesh of human ability (psuchikos) are unable to cooperate with the realm of the Spirit that leads us into the realms of faith that supercedes natural laws. The realm of the spiritual provides a relationship with God where nothing is impossible. In this realm men walk on water turn water to wine, have peace in the midst of a storm and are made one with God (John 17:21; Matthew 8:8; 14:28). Because this realm is so unlimited containing all the fullness of God and eternity even those who are not lacking in any of the gifts (charismata) still have a call to so much more, the spiritual (pneumatikos) 1 Corinthians 1:7.

<sup>12</sup> In order to begin to understand the meaning of this verse, we must look to the contrast that Paul gives in the next few verses. One of the more important contrasts is between being spiritual and being earthly (or carnal, thinking as mere men) (1 Corinthians 3:1-4). A person who thinks after the manner and reasoning of men will never be able to think according to the wisdom and insight that is given by the Holy Spirit. Secondly, and even more important, is to recognize that the spiritual mind is the same as the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 10:4-5). The mind of Christ (that is, the thinking and disposition of Christ Jesus that is supplied to us by the Holy Spirit) allows us to understand things that had never before entered into the heart of man (1 Corinthians 2:9-10). These are the things that are taught to us by the Holy Spirit, and not by man or by our own developed natural instincts and reasoning (1 Corinthians 2:13). If we will be taught by the Holy Spirit and receive His instruction and insight, then we will be able to know everything regarding the judgments of God (1 John 2:20,27). However, we have to make a transition from dependency upon human faculties to the guidance and instruction of the Holy Spirit. Faced with divine revelation, the carnal mind is like a donkey in a physics class.

The ability to be led and governed by the Holy Spirit, so that one may judge all things and know all things with respect to the will of the Father, is developed each time we say yes to God and obey His word. When we refuse to walk after our own understanding, and we cry out to the Holy Spirit for direction, God enables us to hear and understand the things of the Spirit with greater wisdom and insight (Psalm 36:9; 119:105).

16 For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him but we have the mind<sup>13</sup> of Christ<sup>14</sup>.

### Chapter 3

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Each time we refuse the voice of sin and iniquity, the voice of God's divine judgments sound out that much louder (Hebrews 3:13; Psalm 95:8; Mark 13:22; Matthew 13:15; Jeremiah 6:10). The Holy Spirit desires to fill us with the knowledge of God in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, but at some point we have to refuse to walk after our own knowledge - so that we might receive His (Colossians 1:9; James 1:5-6).<sup>13</sup> He has put His Thoughts in my Mind and in my Heart He has established them.

The prophets of old spoke of the day that a New Covenant would come, a day when men would be turned back to know God and to serve Him with all of their hearts. God would make men His dwelling place and give them a new heart and a new spirit, that day has come! God has put His thoughts in our mind and in our hearts He has established them.

God's word expresses His thoughts. His thoughts come from the nature of His heart. He has put the laws of His nature in our minds and He has written them upon our hearts (Hebrews 8:10; 10:16). They are not written on tables of stone as the First Covenant but on fleshly tables of the heart (2 Corinthians 3:3).

Who can be so bold as to say they have the mind of God? Who can proclaim that they not the thoughts of God and are submitted to them? Are not these things far from us and completely out of reach for the scripture says, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Who hath know the mind of the Lord... (Romans 11:33-34). We can say that those who have been born of the Spirit have been given this mind of Christ and renewed in the knowledge of the Lord! We have put on the new man which is RENEWED in KNOWLEDGE after the image of Him that created him" (Colossians 3:10). Now in Christ Jesus we can boldly say that we know "... all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3). These treasures are all hid in Christ Jesus and only those who have Christ dwelling in them have this knowledge of God. It is not flesh and blood that has this knowledge. This knowledge is not found within our intellect or the realm of our reasoning. These thoughts are not our thoughts, they are the thoughts of God, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts higher than your thoughts" (Isaiah 56:8-9). Yet, now through the New Covenant God has put His Holy Spirit in us. We have been joined unto the Lord and made one with Him and through the Spirit we now have the knowledge of the Lord. We have been given an understanding heart that we might know Him! By the Holy Ghost those things that are in His heart flow out of us like rivers!

Through the free gift of salvation we have been given all the unsearchable depths of God. All those things in God which man could never discover or ever attain to now is ours by the Holy Spirit that has been given unto us. As it is written, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard neither has it entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit for the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God (1 Corinthians 2:10-11). The Holy Spirit has come with the assignment of the Father to take everything that belongs to the Lord Jesus and our heavenly Father and revealing them unto us (John 16:13-15). Many will say that this cannot be. They will look to the arm of the flesh and say impossible! They will strain and wrestle to achieve these things but they will remain out of reach until on bended knee we accept what God has given. And then by the act of obedience we confess that which God has said and faith arises and makes the impossible possible and we find ourselves in a communion with the Most High God!

<sup>14</sup> The call of God upon our life demands that we be transfigured by the renewing of our mind (Romans 12:2; (metamorphoo- Matt 17:2)). Being renewed in the spirit of our mind is accepting that we have been created in righteousness and true holiness through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 3:6). It is accepting that He has made all things new and submitting to the image of Christ, which has been given us by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:28; 2 Peter 1:4; 2 Corinthians 5:18; Colossians 1:27). It is in this reflection of ourselves that we behold the glory of the Lord and are changed into the same image (2 Corinthians 3:18). Father demands that we believe the testimony that He has given to us of His Son. God demanded that man become a new creature that the old be put to death so that the new may come forth (Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 5:14-17). Now let us all believe and accept the great miracle of salvation that Gods has accomplished for us in Christ Jesus and acknowledge every good thing that is in us (Philemon 1:6; 1 John 3:24; 4:4; John 14:23; 17:21-23).

3- For you are still in the flesh for as long as they are jealousy, envy, fierceness, ranging, quarreling, strife, discord conflict, arguing, disputes, contention, division, dissension and among you are you not of the flesh and behaving according to mankind<sup>15</sup>.

9- For we are God's co-laborers; you are God's field, God's building<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> One of the important things to realize is that many Greek words are loaded with meaning beyond what a single English word kind provide. Therefore, in an attempt to grasp the behavior that Paul is addressing we have used all the English words that these biblical Greek words represent.

Unfortunately there were those in the church of Corinth who were unwilling to leave the actions of the spirit of disobedience and of the nature of the world behind and were bringing their evil practices into the community of the church. The fact is that Paul made it very clear that those who participate in this ungodly behavior of strife and dissension have no inheritance with Christ and in the Kingdom of God (Galatians 5:20-21; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Ephesians 5:4-7; Romans 1:29-32; Mark 7:22-23). They were those at Corinth who were new born babes that somehow were not grasping their need to move beyond the influences and behaviors belonging to the spirit of the world. They failed to realize that such behavior not only jeopardized their soul but also was such an offence to the community of the church that Paul commanded that such a one not be associated with at all (1 Corinthians 5:11; Ephesians 5:4-7). If one takes a short list of these community offences that are contrary to the nature of Christ and a reproach to the community of the church we would count up about 54 of them: 1- Gossip, 2- whispering; 3- evil speaking; 4- malice; 5- ill will; 6- hatefulness; 7- deceit; 8- guile; 9- distorting the truth/fraud/ 10- envy; 11- insincerity; 12- insolent; 13- haughty; 14 boastful (alazon)- boaster/show-off/; 15- conceit/ conceited; 16- bitterness; 17- rage/ boiling/ hot tempered; 18- anger; 19- wrangling; 20- filthy talk; 21- morbid craving for controversy; 22- disputes; 23- quarreling; 24- dissension; 24- discord; 26- debate; 27- disunity; 28- division; 29- suspicion; 30- conceited; 31- enmities; 32- conflict; 33- hatred; 34- animosity; 35- discord; 36- feuds; 37- hostilities; 38- antagonism; 39- strife; 40- debate; 41- rivalries; 42- discord; 43- contention; 44- conflict; 45- arguments; 46- insults; 47- Jealousy; 48- factions; 49- sect; 50- party; 51- opinions; 53- selfishness; 54- contentiousness; 55- slander. Someone may say how can I possibly keep up with all of these offences the answer is simply walk in love even as Christ Jesus has loved us let us also love one another.

<sup>16</sup> There is a fruit, a produce that God demands individually and collectively: and that is the life of Jesus revealed in us. The church (which is the primary expression of the kingdom of God on earth) is described as a field, a building, a vineyard, a body, a community, a wife, and a nation (1 Corinthians 3:6-12; 12:13-27; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:20-21; 4:4,16; 5:30; 1 Peter 2:9; 2:4-8; Matthew 21:43; John 15:1-5; Romans 12:5; Colossians 1:18; Matthew 16:18). With these types, God described what He has purposed to bring forth within the church - and that is the full expression of the person of Jesus with all of His majesty, authority, and power. The church is the fullness of God, the habitation of the Lord, and the revelation of the person of Jesus.

God the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the body of Jesus so that we may function in a perfect unity of the Spirit in signs, wonders, and miracles. The church began with the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, and it functions and operates with the same baptism (Acts 2:1-4; 1 Corinthians 12:1-28). If we refuse to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, who has come to lead us and guide us and glorify Jesus, then we are not functioning as the church; but as a religious organization run and operated by man. If the individuals within the church, who are the building blocks, refuse to live the life of Christ and dwell in the gifts and callings given to them by the Holy Spirit - then they will not be able to collectively participate in the building of God.

The church service described in the Bible is governed by the Holy Spirit. The activities of the church service are to be far more than what we have made them. The ministry of the signs, wonders, and miracles of Jesus are resident in the church; and should be foremost if Jesus is to be revealed (1 Corinthians 12:7,28). The messages and the sermons should come by way of knowledge, revelation, prophecy, and the teachings of the Holy Spirit; not the liturgical creations of men (1 Corinthians 14:6). Every person should be immersed by the Holy Spirit into the presence and person of Jesus under the anointing of the Holy Spirit - and have a prophecy, a tongue, an interpretation, and a revelation. Every person in the body of Christ, the church, is supposed to function in the service with a manifestation of the Spirit that has been provided to them according to the will and purposes of the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 12:7-13,28; 14:24-26).

Jesus made it very clear that we are to have rivers of the expression of the Holy Spirit coming out of our lives (John 7:38-39; Acts 2:33). He said that we could not be the witnesses of His resurrection without



11-For no other foundation can be laid other than the one in place which is Christ Jesus<sup>17</sup>.  
13 The work of each one will become visible for the day will make it known because it will be revealed by fire and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done<sup>18</sup>.

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being endued with the power of the Holy Ghost and then functioning in the signs, wonders, and miracles of that power (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; John 14:12; Mark 16:17). We were born of the Spirit to be filled with the Spirit to walk in the Spirit. Everything that the Holy Spirit was credited with in the life of Jesus resulted in a display of signs, wonders, and miracles. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost and power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil - and that is what His church is supposed to do as the expression of His person on this earth. We were not called by God to be children tossed and deceived by men, but those who express the fullness of the measure of the maturity of Christ Jesus (Ephesians 4:13-14).

<sup>17</sup> We must understand that the life of Christ is the foundation that has been set into place by God. The foundation encompasses all that the Father wills for us to be and to do in Christ. It is the life of Christ that is the heavenly pattern and model that pleases the Father and represents the redeemed and consecrated life. Even more important than the first covenant we should beware and take heed that we do not alter the pattern of the Son that we are commanded to follow (Isaiah 28:16-17; Mark 8:34; John 10:27; 1 Peter 2:21; Exodus 25:9,40; Hebrews 8:5).

Those who are on this foundation will conform to the image of the Son and turn away from wickedness to live the life modeled for us by Christ Jesus (Romans 8:29; 2 Timothy 2:19; Hebrew 6:1). The foundation consist of being born of God, being made sons of God, being made one with Christ Jesus, no longer living our life but the life of Christ, walking in the Spirit, being made the righteousness of God, being baptized in the Spirit, doing his work and even greater works, being the representatives of Christ Jesus in the earth, accepting the same inheritance and living out our lives as the living Epistles of Christ (John 1:13; John 1:13; 3:3,5; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 3:9; 4:7; 5:1,4,18; John 3:3,5; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 3:9; 5:18; 1 John 5:4; John 1:12; Romans 8:14; Gal 4:6; John 17:21-23; 1 John 3:24; Colossians 1:28; 1 John 4:4, 13; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 8:6; Ephesians 2:5,6; Galatians 2:20; 5:15; John 14:12; Mark 16:17; John 17:21-23; 2 Corinthians 3:3).

We are supplied with evidences as to whether or not we are one the foundation of Christ Jesus and not on the changing opinions of man that are as earth and sand without foundation and always shifting about being totally unstable (Luke 6:48-49; Matthew 7:25-26; James 1:7-8; Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13; 1 Kings 18:21). We come to realize that it is not just in the hearing or the believing of the gospel but the doing of it (James 1:22; Matthew 7:21,24; 12:50; Luke 6:46; James 2:19. The life of Jesus was imparted to us when we were created anew in Him so that we could live out the life that last forever, the life of the Son (1 John 5:12; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 4:24; John 10:10).

Jesus is not only the foundation but also the one who builds the temple of the Lord (Zechariah 6:12). Upon the foundation of Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit builds a spiritual house after the pater of Jesus Christ the Son of God. If we are going to build properly upon the foundation then we must recognize that we are to build those things that will cause those who hear us to grow into the maturity of Christ Jesus (Hebrews 6:1; Ephesians 2:22; 4:12-13). The church unlike a natural building grows instead of being built. As those in the church conform to the foundation, Christ Jesus, the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit causes a sanctuary to grow that is filled with the fullness of God (Ephesians 1:23; 2:22; Matthew 16:18).

<sup>18</sup> The things that are done by the word of God will last forever. If we live our lives after our own thinking and our own desires it will amount to little more than the grass that withers and the flower that fades but if we live our lives by the word of God then everything that we do will remain forever. The truth of God's word cannot be overthrown and everything that the word of God produces is eternal. The word of God and the faith that it produces is likened unto silver and gold which when burned in the fire is not consumed. Paul revealed to us that all of the things that we do in this life will one day be tested in the fire just as gold and silver are tested in the fire. If the things that we do are in obedience to God's word then just like gold or silver the fire of God will prove them to be genuine.

Now this is especially true with respect to the building of the local church, which is Paul's specific application in this text (Ephesians 2:19-22). The church is God's building it does not belong to men (1 Corinthians 3:9). We must build according to God's design and conform our actions and behaviors to that which God has fashioned. We must recognize the role of the local church in the Kingdom of God. The church was purchased with the blood of Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is the place where the fullness of God is to be revealed and experienced and each person bears a responsibility to participate with

15- If anyone's work shall be burned up he will suffer loss but he will be saved from death but as it were by fire<sup>19</sup>.

## Chapter 4

20- For the kingdom of God<sup>20</sup> is not in speech but in power<sup>21</sup>.

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the revelation of His glory (Ephesians 1:23; 1 Corinthians 12; Acts 2:1-4). It is the place that we learn responsibility, accountability and how to walk in love with one another (Matthew 28:20; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 12:25; Hebrews 10:25; Galatians 6:10; Ephesians 4:25; Romans 12:5). God has made us the living stones of the local church that will only be a part of those glorious things described in His word if we are obedient to do the things that He has commanded (1 Peter 2:5). It is vitally important that each person recognize what God has commanded concerning their role in the church so that they may be ready to give an account on that DAY.

<sup>19</sup> The fire of God is seen throughout the Bible as part of the glory cloud that surrounds God (Deuteronomy 4:24,33; Deuteronomy 5:24-26; Deuteronomy 9:3,10; Deuteronomy 18:16; Exodus 13:21-22; Exodus 14:24; Numbers 9:15; Ezekiel 1:4; Psalm 50:3; Revelation 4:5). It is in this fire of His glory and presence that we have been baptized by Jesus, and are commanded to remain and continually be filled with those things that belong to God.

Every offering that was acceptable to God was presented in the fire. The fire either fell on it from God, or it was fire that was taken off of the altar of God. The fire of God consumed it from off the altar, and transferred it from the earthly into the heavenly (Leviticus 9:24; 1 Kings 18:24; 1 Chronicles 21:26; Romans 12:1; Joshua 13:14). In the fire of God no earthly thing can remain. Every false work and every earthly work that is likened unto wood, stubble, or hay will be burned up. Only those things that are of the nature and character of God which last forever can remain in the fire of God. Those things, like faith, that are likened unto pure gold remain; and are perfected in the midst of the fire of God's presence (1 Peter 1:7). If you will let the fire of God fall on you, every false work will be burned up; and you will begin to participate in those things that have an eternal reward (Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16; Acts 2:3; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15). God the Holy Spirit is calling out to you to purchase for yourself a life of purity and truth that is likened unto gold on fire in the fire - so that your spiritual garments may be spotless and clean (Revelation 3:18; Revelation 19:8; Isaiah 24:15).

<sup>20</sup> The preaching of the gospel is supposed to be a demonstration of the power of the kingdom of God. This is most definitely what Jesus modeled for us and called all those around Him to also do. Paul preached the gospel with the demonstration of the Spirit and power, and was unwilling to leave any minister of the gospel to the communication of concepts and ideas - without a proof that what he was saying was indeed the commands and desires of the Almighty God (1 Corinthians 2:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:5). The gospel of Christ and of his kingdom, left to the communication of words and ideas without the display of God's love and grace, will result in people placing their faith in men and not in God alone (1 Corinthians 2:5). The kingdom of God can only be revealed when the Spirit of God is at work (Matthew 4:23, 9:35, 12:28; Luke 9:2; Galatians 3:5). When the Holy Spirit invades people's lives, demons go and sicknesses and diseases are cured. The kingdom of God is a demonstration of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and an encounter of heaven on earth. To have this living reality of God's presence and power in our lives, we must be endowed with power from on high.

Paul had to contend with people who were caught up in the concepts and ideas of their own imaginations. These men attempted to turn people's hearts away from the simplicity of the gospel: the simplicity of salvation, signs, wonders, and miracles manifested by the working of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Paul's remedy to the confusion was a proof that the gospel of the kingdom was being preached, which is always accompanied by a demonstration of power in the church (1 Corinthians 12:7-11,28). Anyone can have doctrinal ideas and concepts, but only those anointed by God can have the demonstration of the Spirit (Acts 14:3; Romans 15:19; Hebrews 2:4). Paul demanded a showdown with these folks who made themselves authorities concerning the will of God - he demanded to see a display of power. The kingdom power was the proof of God in Christ, and is now the proof of Christ in us (Mark 16:17-20; Matthew 28:18-20; John 14:12; Acts 1:8; Acts 3:6; 2 Corinthians 13:3,5; 1 John 4:4).

<sup>21</sup> Paul had already underscored this important point of the manifestation of the power of God and the demonstration of the Spirit over sermonizing and speeches earlier in 1 Corinthians 2:4. Jesus had already made it known that the kingdom of God is more than a realm of the future but is also a present display of

## Chapter 5

7- Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump as you are unleavened for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us<sup>22</sup>.

11- But now I have put it in writing not to associate with anyone that is a brother who is identified as a fornicator, or greedy, or idolater, or slanderer, or drunkard, or thief; do not even eat with them<sup>23</sup>.

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the power of God encountered through the preaching of the gospel. In Matthew 12:28 Jesus said, " But If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God then the kingdom of God has come to you." According to Jesus and Paul if people are going to encounter the kingdom of God, which is what the gospel is all about, then their must be a display of the power of God (Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 10:7-8; Luke 9:2,11; Colossians 1:13; 4:11; Acts 8:12). The display of the power of the kingdom of God that Jesus referred to extended from casting out devils to the encounter of God the Father on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27). Today many have drifted far away from the way that Jesus and His church ministered. In fact, I am afraid we are doing exactly what they told us not to do, depend upon speeches and our own powers of communication. Even though Paul was dedicated to preaching the word of God he made it very clear that the ministry must consist of the demonstration of the power of God as well (1 Thessalonians 1:5; 1 Corinthians 2:4; 14:24-25; Romans 15:19). If we are not willing to allow the Spirit of God to take hold of our lives and reveal the ministry and anointing of Jesus through our lives then the gospel is not being preached and the kingdom of God is not being revealed. If we expect peoples lives to be changed through our speeches and Christian philosophy then we are mistaken. We must return to the faith that was once delivered to the saints and recognize that it is the power of God and demonstration of the Spirit that sets the message of the gospel apart from all of the other religions of the world. When the power of God is manifested then the life of the risen Savior is revealed. When men encounter the power of God that is imparted to the believer by the Holy Spirit then they encounter the active reigning dynamic of the kingdom of God that is now present, for God reigns in the Kingdom of men and Jesus is exalted above all other powers (Ephesians 1:21; Philippians 2:9; Acts 2:33-34; Daniel 4:7,25, 32; 5:21, 6:26).

<sup>22</sup> Jesus was sacrificed as the unblemished Passover Lamb (John 1:29; Revelation 5:6,12; 7:14; 12:11; 1 Peter 1:19; Hebrews 10:10,14). To be a Christians is to live in the Passover and in the deliverance from sin and death to which we were enslaved not just for seven days but for all of eternity. To be the new dough that symbolizes the bread of deliverance the church was to live in purity and truth. They were commanded to , "Come out from among them and be separate says the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Corinthians 6:17). Leaven is a symbol of impurity and sin and as such the day before the Passover offering the house was to be cleansed of all leaven. If anyone partook of leaven during this time that they were separated unto the Passover they were to be cut off from the covenant (Exodus 12: 18-20; 13:7). Paul commanded the church to cast out the ones who continued to live in immorality as though it was a preparation for the Passover reminding the church that they were unleaven, holy dough and partakers of Christ. Thus he warns the church that such compromises with the world would ultimately jeopardize who they were as the community of the holy church of Christ (Galatians 5:9; 2 Timothy 2:17). If anything attempts to defile our identity of purity then we must recognize that it has to be removed otherwise it affects the identity of our Passover Lamb and bring an approach against the name of Christ (Hebrews 10:29). The purity that we are called to live in is not just recognizing social boundaries but our response to being the temple of the Holy Spirit. We cannot partake of Christ and of the world at the same time (2 Corinthians 6:14-16). If we compromise with sin and the world then it affects our communion with Christ and our interaction with Him.

The blood of our Passover ratified the New Covenant and purchased our deliverance. This is not an act of "Kippur" (atonement) but the deliverance that brought us out of bondage and made us the holy people of God (1 Corinthians 11:25-26). Now that we have been bought with a price we are to glorify God in our bodies and spirits, which belong to Him (1 Corinthians 6:20). We are those who are marked with the blood of the Lamb and protected by the power of the Almighty from the death that would destroy us. We live under the Shekinah glory of the Spirit of God and our conduct and community must reflect our heavenly dwelling.

## Chapter 6

11- And this is what you were but now you are washed but now you are sanctified by the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> There are many things to consider about what Paul is saying here, but one of the more important things would be the idea of tolerance. God's people are to have the mercy and the forgiveness that our heavenly Father has, but we have a more important issue to consider. The name of the Lord Jesus must not be profaned (Ezekiel 36:21-23; Romans 2:24). Mercy and forgiveness are not about compromise or the tolerance of things that are wrong. Mercy and forgiveness are the means by which a person who is wrong can be made right. The command of God is that everyone repent and turn from their wickedness - which was made possible by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. When the people of God begin to tolerate and compromise with evil in the name of mercy and forgiveness, they have lost all sense of what God demands; and find themselves agreeing with iniquity. Paul is so emphatic about this that he said to the church of the Thessalonians not to keep company with anyone who walks disorderly (2 Thessalonians 3:6).

The context in which we find this message was a man who was in a relationship with his father's wife. More than likely it was a situation in which she was not actually his biological mother, and he had married her so that everyone could find a way to justify the relationship; but regardless Paul called it fornication. Of course the Greek word 'pornea' is a much broader term for sexual immorality than our English word "fornication" will allow. In any case, an otherwise on-fire church had found a way to justify the existence of these two people in their congregation. Perhaps they had convinced themselves that eventually they would come around, but regardless Paul wanted them kicked out immediately so that the name of the Lord would not be blasphemed.

We all have to wonder what our churches would look like if we lived by the gospel that Paul preached. Many may be appalled by the thought of a man being with his mother, and rightly so; but the next issue that each person must deal with is: what sins are you willing to tolerate? What sort of people will you allow to stand in the congregation of the righteous - singing the same worship songs, praying the same prayers, but unwilling to change? The Holy Spirit demands that we preach a message of repentance and radical change. If we do not and continue to tolerate iniquity, there is no way that we are representing the Kingdom of God and the will of the Father. We must preach mercy and forgiveness, but we must also demand repentance with no tolerance for iniquity. The demonic pressure against such a radical position is great; especially as apostasy increases and compromise is demanded for success. However, we need to fear and realize what God demands - and the consequences of getting it wrong. We now stand in God's place declaring His counsel, and if we do not accurately represent Him then surely the judgement will be severe. The only way that we can lead others into the kingdom of God is revealing to them what God has said. What a great tragedy it would be to have led people into hell while we preach Jesus! One thing is certain: those who continue to allow sin in their lives will not enter into the kingdom of God (Matthew 7:23; Luke 13:27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:5). God's people must be instructed in the ways of life, and taught surrender and obedience to God.

<sup>24</sup> Without the active work of the Holy Spirit, the redemption of Christ Jesus and all its effects would not be realized by anyone. But by the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Holy Spirit, we have received all of the benefits and blessings of being made a new creation. The Ethiopian could scrub his skin night and day, but his color would remain the same. A garment once dyed with the stain of scarlet and crimson will always remain red - no matter how it is washed. The leopard may wish away his spots and the man of flesh may hope for the life of the Spirit, but the nature of it will always remain the same. Preachers and those who have perfected the art of religion may toil night and day to change flesh into spirit, but their efforts will not produce one measurable change; for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and it cannot come into the kingdom (John 3:3-6). However one touch of Jesus, and the sinner will be made a saint. Just as Jesus touched the blind man who immediately received his sight, and the leper who was immediately cleansed - the life of a sinner is washed, justified, and sanctified by the power of His name and the power of the Spirit of our God.

Holiness of heart and life is not the perfection of human nature, but the holiness of the divine nature dwelling within (A.B. Simpson). Men vainly attempt to perfect themselves to make themselves better and worthy of something more from God, but all such efforts are futile. The righteousness of men is as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). Man does not know the way of righteousness; the holiness of God is completely out of

13 Food is for the belly and the belly for food but God shall put an end to both. But the body is not for fornication (pornia) but for the Lord and the Lord for the body<sup>25</sup>

17 But he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit<sup>26</sup>.

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reach. It is only by the mercy and the love of God that the miracle of salvation can come, and the Holy Spirit become our guide: to show us the paths of righteousness and teach us the ways of God.

What we all need to understand very clearly is that unholy, unregenerated, unsanctified men will not dwell in the presence of a Holy God. We must be changed; and that change takes place not by the efforts of religion and ritual, but by the miracle touch of God. God made a way for us to step into this miracle by providing us with the blood of Jesus (Hebrews 10:19-22; John 10:9; 14:6). By Christ Jesus we enter into a realm where the Spirit of God comes and overshadows us, and the divine nature is created within (Ezekiel 36:26; 2 Peter 1:4; Titus 3:5; Colossians 2:11). The new creation, created in righteousness and true holiness, washed from all the filthiness of the flesh and spirit - must then be willing to submit to obedience unto God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit. The former manner of life with all that belongs to the world must not be allowed to come and ruin and mar that which has been made new in Christ Jesus. Oh dear saints, the riches of God are so precious that we must give all attention to making our calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:9-10; Hebrews 2:3).

<sup>25</sup> Just as the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit share the title God they also all three share the title Lord (2 Corinthians 3:17-18; 1 Corinthians 6:17). We also know that all three inhabit the life and body of the redeemed (John 14:20,23; 17:21-23) Although this scripture can appear to refer to the body being for Jesus the passage is more about the Holy Spirit. Recognizing that the Holy Spirit is as much a personality as the Father and Christ Jesus we should realize that we have been given the Spirit of the Holy Spirit. We cannot say that the physical person of the Father or the Lord Jesus or the Holy Spirit dwell in us rather they dwell in us by the Holy Spirit that has been given to us (1 John 3:24; Ezekiel 36:26).

The most important point of this verse is that our body is for the Lord. We are the purchased possession of God and are to glorify Him in both our spirits and our bodies (1 Corinthians 6:20). We must be careful not to grieve the Holy Spirit by doing something with our bodies that is contrary to His ways (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5). Our bodies are to be offered up as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable unto God (Romans 12:1). Our bodies are God's temple and are to be the place for the function of His divine service. To allow the lust of the flesh to elicit its evil work on our bodies is a terrible violation against the dwelling place of God and the habitation of the Lord. God in His mercy and love does not run short on forgiveness in order to teach us perfect submission and obedience to His will but we must be willing to be taught. The Holy Spirit has set us apart from everything that belongs to this world so that all the glory of Jesus might be established in our lives (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18). Even as the human spirit gives life to the body and is the source of all motivation and inspiration even so the Holy Spirit is to become to us the very essence of our existence moving us in the expressions of all those things that pertain to life and godliness (James 2:26). We may now feel what the Holy Spirit feels, think what He thinks and act as He acts for our spirits are joined to the Lord (1 Corinthians 6:17).

<sup>26</sup> How could it be possible to communicate a greater degree of oneness with Christ Jesus than is expressed in these verses. Our bodies are the members of Christ, our spirits are one with him, and our bodies are also the temples of the Holy Ghost. To think that our whole spirit, soul and body has not been redeemed and made holy unto God steps outside the boundary of the word of God (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Colossians 1:22; Philippians 2:15; Titus 2:14; Jude 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Hebrews 2:11; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; Ephesians 5:27). When we were redeemed by the blood of Jesus every stain of sin was washed away from every part of our being spirit, soul and body. The fact that we have been born of the Spirit is at the very heart of the New Testament (John 3:6; Romans 8:9; Ezekiel 36:36-27). The idea of somehow leaving the soul out of what the blood of Jesus has cleansed and made new is an assumption that goes beyond reason. The soul is as much a part of us as our spirit and our bodies (1 Peter 1:9; 22; 2:25; Ephesians 6:6; 3 John 1:2; Hebrews 6:19; 10:39). Our spirit soul and bodies describe who we are as individuals and so when we are singled out as redeemed by the blood of Jesus then it is not some part of us but the whole of who we are. Although, our bodies are still corruptible and must wait for the resurrection yet they are holy and belong to God. We are commanded to glorify God in our bodies just as we do in our spirits because they are both His (1 Corinthians 6:20; Philippians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16; 2 Corinthians 4:10-11). Jesus told Peter that if just one part was washed then the whole would be clean (John 13:10). God has gone to

18-Flee fornication! Every sin that a man does is without the body but the fornicator sins against the body itself<sup>27</sup>.

## Chapter 9

11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it too much that we should reap your carnal things<sup>28</sup>?

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great lengths to convince us that we are one with Him by describing the holiness of every part of our being. The most important part of the gospel seems sadly neglected by many and that is that we are one with Jesus Christ, He is in us and we are in Him (John 14:20; 17:11,21,22,23,26; 6:56; 15:5-7; Romans 8:1; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:17-18; Colossians 1:20; 1 John 4:12; 3:24)

<sup>27</sup> The act of fornication is underscored by the Greek word itself, which is 'pornia.' From this word we also derive the word 'porno,' which like the Greek word 'porne' refers to the selling of sexuality. One of the most dominant practices of pornia today is Pornography. Pornography also crosses over into another activity of the demonic realm called lasciviousness, which is the practice of inciting sexual lust. This flood of pornography that has swept over the earth has further expanded the meaning of fornication. It is one of the primary focuses of the demonic attack against humanity. Satan desires to destroy man and the way that he does so is through sin. There is nothing good about sin and it must not be accepted by the people of God. Our society, which has been overrun by the demonic, wants us to accept fornication as normal, entertaining and recreational. Just like the ancient city of Corinth that was steeped in pagan philosophy our children are taught in society to accept sexual immorality as a normal part of life.

Fornication by definition may be understood as every extramarital sexual practice. People need to come to realize that sexual pleasure is not worth the consequences that it brings both now and in eternity. The practice is so horrific to God that in the Old Testament the daughter of a Priest who committed fornication was to be burned alive (Leviticus 21:9). Furthermore, no child of fornication could be accepted as part of the holy community of God's people (Deuteronomy 23:3). The toleration and even more the promotion of fornication in the Old Testament subjected the whole nation to divine judgment (Leviticus 19:29). God warns everyone against the snare of the pornia in Proverbs 5 and Proverbs 6:24-35, revealing that there is a demonic snare so entangling that a person goes down into hell and can never escape.

The New Testament is no less sever with the practice of fornication. Yes, there is mercy and forgiveness with God but it must also be remembered that when the woman was taken in the act of adultery Jesus said, "go and sin no more." The Spirit of God makes it very clear in this passage that our bodies are the Temples of God (vs.19). We have been purchased with the blood of Jesus and made new by the Spirit of God so that we can glorify God in our bodies (vs. 20). Previously, in this same message Paul said that if anyone defiles the Temple of God then God would destroy such a person (3:16-17). How serious is Jesus about this? He said if your eye offends you pluck it out for it is better to enter into life having one eye than to be cast into hell with two (Matthew 5:29). How many times has God warned us in the New Testament that if we do these things we will die? Let us consider that God knows the ways of life not man. Lets obey what he has to say and honor his commandments less we find ourselves taken prisoner by an eternity without God (Mark 7:21; Acts 15:20,29; 21:25; Romans 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:1,9,10,11; 6:9; 7:2; 10:8; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Jude 7).

<sup>28</sup> There are two words that are used in contrast to that which is spiritual; and both can refer to things not necessarily evil or bad, such as money and an earthly body. One is the Greek word for natural (psychikos) as it is used in regards to a natural body in 1 Corinthians 15:46; and the other is carnal (sarkika): found here and also in Romans 15:27 with respect to material things. These two words can in many respects be considered synonyms, and primarily refer to how men take care of their own needs in this world without divine assistance (Galatians 4:23). Within the framework of that which is natural and carnal, there can be an absence of cooperating with the spiritual. However, the natural and carnal things can be used in service to the Kingdom; but they must be submitted to the Father's will (Hebrews 9:10). The natural body yielded to God becomes the temple of the Holy Ghost, and the instrument of God's glory revealed in the earth (1 Corinthians 6:13,19-20). Carnal things such as money can be used to advance the gospel, if sowed into the kingdom - which God Himself will then bless and multiply (2 Corinthians 9:6-9).

Above all things, our heavenly Father wants us to trust Him, and focus on those things that pertain to what He has commanded and purposed us to do. He wants us to look to Him for divine provision in all things, rather than looking to how we can benefit from our own efforts and self-interest. It is easy enough to be

25 Now everyone engaged in a contest is temperate<sup>29</sup> in all things they do it for a corruptible crown but we do it to receive an incorruptible one.

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overwhelmed and consumed with our own earthly interests and goals. Yet God demands that we take no thought for tomorrow. We are to deny ourselves and live only to do the will of the Father (Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). Jesus tells us not to take thought for what we are going to wear or what we are going to eat, but rather to seek above all other things the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:25-34; Luke 12:22-31). We can have vision in the kingdom that looks out into eternity, but when it comes to seeking earthly things we are not to look beyond today. These natural and carnal things that focus only on our own self-interests are temporal, and perish with the using. Our purpose is to labor for the food that endures unto everlasting life (John 6:27). We don't need to consider our natural and carnal needs, but instead the things that belong to the will of the Father and His eternal purposes; and in so doing the Father will provide superabundantly for us (2 Corinthians 9:8; Philippians 4:19). This does not do away with the need to go to work and to be responsible with daily tasks. However, when it comes to the profit and purpose of the day, we recognize it is God's provision and purpose that we look for - and not our own. It is the Lord who causes us to prosper when we obey His voice (Isaiah 1:19; Deuteronomy 8:18; Proverbs 10:22; Psalm 112:3; 2 Chronicles 1:11-12). We must not define the meaning of our lives based upon that which we possess, but rather based upon what we have received from heaven. We must not allow natural and carnal things to consume our lives and take our focus off of what the Father has promised and willed for us to do.

We can be certain that the natural carnal self-interest of life will lead us away from God. Satan is the enemy of our souls: who goes about looking for those he can devour. Spiritual wickedness looks for the opportunity to deceive us and overpower us. Our only protection is the presence of the Lord and submission to His will (Ephesians 6:10). Paul referred to His former life in Romans 7:14 as being both carnal and sold under sin. In other words, he was a prisoner of everyday life and circumstances; as well as being dominated by a nature of sin. Yet under a different set of circumstances, Paul scolded some of the saints at Corinth (who had a divine nature) for being carnal and allowing some level of envy, strife, and division; which showed that they were walking as mere men, rather than giving themselves to the word of God and the activities of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:1-4). Those at Corinth were behaving themselves in a spiritually immature way, which prevented them from being able to receive those deeper spiritual things that Paul wanted to communicate to them. Their carnality was not only preventing them from maturing in God; it was resulting in them coming under the influence of the spirit of the world. It is at this point that carnality can be seen as an entry point for the works of the flesh that are named in Galatians 5:19-21. We can be sure that it does not take much carnality and selfish pursuits to result in the works of the flesh being manifested.

The child of God does not have a nature of sin; but Satan is looking for any opportunity to impose that same evil lusts of his spirit upon anyone he is able to. All that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life - will certainly impose its demonic influence if we give any place to the devil (1 John 2:16-17; Ephesians 2:2-3; 4:27). We are at war against fleshly lust; and we must understand that it is only by walking in obedience to the word of God and the Spirit of God that we are victorious (1 Peter 2:11; 1 John 4:4). Satan, who is the prince and the power of the air, would impose every evil thing upon the child of God; and we must understand how to give ourselves continually to walking in the Spirit and minding spiritual things (Romans 8:4; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 2:2-6; 6:11-18).

<sup>29</sup> The message of temperance is one of the three primary messages that Paul highlighted in his address to Felix (Acts 24:25). We should therefore place the subject of temperance along side of righteousness and judgment. Temperance is one of the fruits of the Spirit that many of us know very little about. It has basically been categorized as self-control and we leave it there without too much more consideration. However, there is more to temperance than just self-control for it is the ability to rule over every desire and thing that presents itself to an individual. In order to grasp the meaning of this very important word we must appreciate the fact that the stem 'krai' denotes power or lordship. The basic meaning of this Greek word is then grasped by its adjective 'enkraates' which is defined as one who has a status of power or rule. For the ancient Greeks this word referred to the truly free and independent man who was not dominated by anything. Socrates recognized this as a cardinal virtue. To Plato it meant superiority to every desire. In the Hermetic writings it was the ability that rises up in the decade of powers. Paul revealed it to be one of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:23). Peter listed it as one of the necessary attributes of

## Chapter 10

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16 The cup of blessing which we bless is it not fellowship of the blood<sup>30</sup> of Christ? The bread which we break is it not a fellowship of the body of Christ.

## Chapter 11

17- Now with these instructions I do not commend you because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse.

18- To begin with when you come together as a church I hear there are divisions among you and I partly believe it<sup>31</sup>.

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consecration to God (2 Peter 1:6). By definition then temperance (enkrateia) is the absolute power that one exercises over oneself or anything else.

Paul uses the word to describe the unwavering commitment of an athlete to his training. In order to walk in this divine ability or power that is supplied to us by the Holy Spirit we must yield to God as we would in any other way. If the nature of God is going to be manifested in our lives then we must be reminded at all times that without Him we can do nothing (2 Peter 1:4; John 15:5). As an athlete devotes himself to his training we must yield ourselves to the training and instruction of the Holy Spirit. We have a far greater reward awaiting us both now and throughout eternity: a crown of life, a crown of righteousness and a crown of glory (1 Peter 5:4; James 1:12; Revelation 2:10; 2 Timothy 4:8). As the expert swordsmen learns through commitment and strict training to wield the sword we must be willing to give our members over to God so that they become the weapons of righteousness that He has ordained (Romans 6:13; 2 Corinthians 6:7).

<sup>30</sup> There are reasons to believe that when the early church came together they always partook of communion, which may be understood as a fellowship with the blood and body of Jesus (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:26). One of the many reasons that we need to continually have communion placed before us is to remind us that it is only by the blood and body of Jesus that we are able to have communion with God. The communion should cause us to remember that we are bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh; that through this new covenant He has made us one (1 Corinthians 10:17; Romans 12:4,5; 12:12,13,20; Ephesians 4:4; Colossians 3:15; Ephesians 5:30; 1 Corinthians 6:15; Colossians 2:19). The Holy Spirit leads us into a heavenly realm where we worship God in Spirit (Ephesians 1:3; 2:6; Hebrews 6:4; 12:22). The heavenly realm is the place where Christ Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father or the heavenly Hobbies of Hobbies. It is a realm of fellowship where we personally interact with God in Spirit and in Truth. When we come into this realm of God's glory we do so by and through the blood and body of Jesus (Hebrews 10:19). It is the blood and life of Jesus that has given to us righteousness, purity and holiness and we must always remember the source of our communion (1 John 1:7; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 1:19).

<sup>31</sup> There are several important points that must be made at the onset if we want to better understand the instruction that Paul has given to the church. First our gathering together as a church is a fellowship and a communion that goes beyond just partaking of the elements of communion (1 Corinthians 5:7-8). The fellowship and the communion of the church is discovered in the unification of each individual into the body of Christ in which we become members one of another (Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 10:17; 12:12,20,25,27; Ephesians 4:25; 5:30; Colossians 3:15). The Spirit of the Lord has baptized us all into one body (1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27). It is up to each one of us to so yield ourselves in such a way as to mind the same things and speak the same thing so as to be perfectly joined together in love (1 Corinthians 1:10; Romans 15:6; Philippians 2:2). Secondly, if divisions are allowed then going to church is not a good



30 Because of this many among you are weak and sick and some have died<sup>32</sup>.

31 But if we evaluate ourselves we would not be judged.

32 But being judged by the Lord we are under training so that we will not be condemned with the world<sup>33</sup>.

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thing it is bad. Through such spiritual violations not only do the individuals bring a damnation on themselves but the name of Jesus is polluted by misrepresentation.

The greatest offense and violation against the fellowship of the saints is division. We must all recognize that God is devoted to a holy union that he has made us a part of (John 17:21-23; John 6:56; John 14:23). The precedence that is set for how the Holy Spirit will move among us is found on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1). We are commanded to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace and we must recognize that if we don't then we are giving place to an evil and opposite spirit, the spirit of division (Ephesians 4:3; Psalms 133:1; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 3:3; Romans 16:17; James 3:14). As much as the Holy Spirit unifies and unites an evil spirit divides and separates.

<sup>32</sup> Every aspect of God and of those things that pertain to Him is Holiness of Holinesses. They are so sacred that there can be nothing but an awesome reverence in our hearts that we are allowed to come near to that which belongs to the Almighty. The things pertaining to Jesus and the sacrifice that He paid for us at Calvary are more sacred than anything that is found in the Bible, including the Holies of Holies and the application of the blood upon its altar (Leviticus 10:6; Leviticus 16:2; 2 Corinthians 3:7-13; Hebrews 10:28-29). When we come to the communion table, we come to a place so sacred; and we must be aware of our responsibilities before God. There are two aspects to the meaning of "not discerning the body." First, the more obvious application is of the body of Jesus, which the communion elements represent; but secondly, it is of the church in general. In reality both of these meanings are tied together, in that there is no separation between Christ Jesus and the church, which is His body (1 Corinthians 10:17; Colossians 1:18,24).

To come to the table of communion and participate in both the love and death of Jesus without having first confessed your sins and having received the cleansing supplied by his blood - is to eat and to drink judgment upon yourself. There are too many people today who have unforgiveness and rebellion in their lives; too many who have accusations in their hearts against the leadership of the church, and thus Christ Himself (Matthew 25:40). They have made themselves unclean through speaking evil with their tongues, and speaking guile with their lips. Unfortunately, many in the church have no conviction, and are unaware of their sinful state. They seem to have no ability to recognize the authority that Christ has placed in His church, nor any understanding that each of us are called to serve one another.

The communion must be a demonstration of the unity that has been given to us in Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:12-13; 1 Corinthians 12:14,18; 1 Corinthians 12:20,25; Ephesians 4:4; Colossians 3:15; Romans 12:4,5). When we partake of the greatest expression of God's love for us - the death of His Son - we must also participate with the Holy Spirit, who pours this same love into our hearts; so that we love one another even as He has loved us (1 John 4:11-12; John 13:34-35; John 15:12,17; John 17:23; Romans 12:10; Romans 13:8; Philippians 2:2; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11; 2 John 1:5). If we are unwilling to do this, then we are actually refusing fellowship with the Lord Jesus; and also refusing His leadership (Ephesians 4:16; Colossians 2:19; 1 John 4:20). One of the primary reasons we partake of this glorious communion table is to make sure that all of these things are properly observed in our life. Together we judge that if one died for all, then we are all dead; so that we should no longer live unto ourselves (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

<sup>33</sup> Jesus said that he both reproves and disciplines those who he loves (Revelation 3:19). Paul said, that if we do not have the discipline in which all of the children share then we are illegitimate and not His children (Hebrews 12:8). The most powerful and absolutely the most royal person in the universe is dedicated to being our teacher. Although there is no room for condemnation in this relationship there is need for correction. As children that have been called to all the fullness of God's glory there are many things that we must learn about walking in righteousness.

## Chapter 12

1 Now concerning the spiritual<sup>34</sup> brethren I would not have you ignorant.

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It is important for us to respond to the Holy Spirit when He corrects us. We must be willing to evaluate ourselves in light of God's word and the direction of the Holy Spirit. This is not self-evaluation based upon arbitrary things because in this light Paul said that he did not judge himself much less receive the judgment of others (1 Corinthians 4:3). Rather this is correction that comes from the word of God and the Spirit of God that is not to result in condemnation or a guilty conscience but simply an acknowledgement that what you have done is wrong and it must be changed. Thus Father has anointed His servants to reprove and reprove so that His people may be established unrebukable, unblameable and unprovable in His sight (2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Timothy 6:14; Colossians 1:22). God disciplines us so that we will conform to His will in all things. The other alternative is to be condemned with the world.

It is important to make a clear distinction between God's correction and condemnation. We now live in the ministry of righteousness not condemnation and there is no condemnation in Christ Jesus for those who walk after the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:9; Romans 8:1). Jesus has not come to condemn us but He is correcting us and has sent the Holy Spirit to educate us in all the ways of God. Albeit sin is still condemned in the life of the believer by God's word and His Spirit and must be condemned by us individually as well. Yet as His children what should always remain before us is the blood of Jesus that washes away every sin. We should always observe the Holy Spirit who is present to give us the divine strength to do all those things that please the Father. Our Heavenly Father's judgment should never lead to condemnation but to a correction graciously received by His children.

<sup>34</sup> Paul sets forth in this chapter and in chapter 14 very specific details of how the saints should function in the context of the church. In Paul's opening statements to the Corinthians, he testified that they were not lacking in any of the 'charismata' (gifts) (1 Corinthians 1:7). Now, Paul speaks of a realm called "the spiritual" that extends beyond the 'charismata'. The 'pneumatikos' (the spiritual) is a word that is synonymous with the Kingdom of God, and incorporates everything that the Spirit of God is doing. Of the 27 times that this word is found in the New Testament, Paul uses it 26 times to express the operation of the Holy Spirit through the saints - in signs and wonders, or to express that which belongs to the realms of God's glory. The first time that Paul uses this word is in Romans 1:11. He used it to express the need that those at Rome had in order to be established in the things of the Kingdom. The impartation that Paul referred to may well have been the ability to understand how to yield to this realm of glory. The first time that he used this word in his letter to the Corinthians, he described how he ministered; and used it in contrast to the realm of the natural (1 Corinthians 2:13).

Paul contrasts the spiritual 'pneumatikos', which is the realm of God, to the natural 'psuchikos', which is the realm of men. The pneumatikos is a realm that speaks of far more than just gifts, but extends into every dimension of interacting with God. The same contrast between the spiritual and the natural is made in 1 Corinthians 15:44-46. And finally, both Jude and James defined that which is of the natural realm (psuchikos) as that which does not have the Spirit (Jude 1:19; James 3:15). Many translations of the Bible add a word that does not exist in any Greek manuscripts: "gifts." To include this word actually narrows the focus from a broader application of "the spiritual." The spiritual is the realm of the Spirit, including all of the activities of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual refers to everything that pertains to the Kingdom of God, the realm in which God and all of His heavenly hosts function. The gifts of the Spirit are only a part of this realm, in which the fruits of the Spirit must also be included. When Jesus ministered, he did so out of the realm of the Kingdom of God, which is the realm of the spiritual. When the realms of the Spirit invaded the place where Jesus ministered, then devils went out of those who were possessed by them, and every sickness and disease was cured: "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come to you" (Matthew 12:28). When the Kingdom of God is revealed, it is revealed through the activity of the Holy Spirit - who brings the realms of God (the spiritual) into the realms of men (the natural).

2 Knowing that you were Gentiles carried away<sup>35</sup> to the speechless idols even as you were lead away.

3 For this reason I will inform you that no one speaking by God's Spirit will call Jesus cursed and without the Holy Spirit no one can say Lord Jesus<sup>36</sup>.

4 Now there are divisions<sup>37</sup> of charismata<sup>38</sup> but the same Spirit.

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Both Jesus and his disciples preached the gospel of the Kingdom, and as they did the realms of the spiritual invaded the place. The spiritual realm was revealed when the glory of the Holy Spirit that was in their lives invaded the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of men (Matthew 9:35; 10:8; Luke 9:1-2; Luke 10:1,9,17; Mark 16:17). When the Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost, it was the realms of the spiritual that began to manifest. The believers were baptized in the Holy Spirit even as one may be baptized in water. And just as Jesus had promised, out of their bellies began to flow rivers of living water, which is an unlimited manifestation of the spiritual. We are called by God to earnestly desire the realm of the spiritual (1 Corinthians 14:1). The Holy Spirit desires to lead us and guide us into this realm, for it is the realm where God dwells and His Kingdom is revealed. The spiritual is where we will live forever in the glory of God: a glory that we are even now partakers of, in this oneness with Him (1 Corinthians 15:44; John 17:22).

<sup>35</sup> The nations had been carried away with the practices of idol worship, which had associated with demon spirits. Paul refers to these demon spirits that are associated with idols in 1 Corinthians 10:19-21. Just as there are those today who function in a familiar spirit, prophecy and give predictions of the future there were also those who in Paul's day declared "words of knowledge" by a familiar spirit. When Paul was in Philippi there was a girl who by a demon spirit would prophecy, predict the future and provide "words of knowledge." The demon spirit could give accurate information such as declaring the truth about who Paul was but at the same time could potentially use the information to its own advantage to insert doctrines of demons. It was essential for Paul to cast the evil spirit out of that girl if for no other reason than God does not need demon advertisement. Paul is addressing a similar issue here he is providing a key for everyone who functions in the realms of the spiritual to first test out the source of the spiritual activity.

<sup>36</sup> Paul was helping those at Corinth and those of us today discern the difference between someone speaking under the influence of an evil spirit and those who speak by the Holy Spirit. The point that Paul is making is that no one under the influence of an evil spirit is going to say Lord Jesus. Therefore, Paul puts forth a very simple test for those who are speaking by God's Spirit. If a person can say Lord Jesus or "Jesus is my Lord" then they are speaking by the Holy Spirit. Now one may think this to be an over trivialized test in that a deceiver potentially could utter these words while all the time being totally insincere. However, if we look at the Greek work 'kurios' we discover that there was more to the meaning of the word than the English concept may denote. In the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) it is the word that translates the name of the Father 'YHWH' over 6800 times beginning in Genesis 2:8. We must also recognize that 'kurios' also translates the Hebrew word for 'master' as in "The Lord (YHWH) said to my Lord (Adoni) set at my right hand until I make your enemies my footstool (Psalms 110:1). Remembering that Jesus applied this scripture to Himself we must also keep in mind that in the New Testament it is equally accurate to translate 'kurios' as 'Master' (Mark 12:36). It is also important to recall that there are other scriptures that suggest that YHWH may be used of the Eternal Word who became flesh and called YHWH's salvation or 'Jesus' such as "And YHWH said to Satan, YHWH rebukes you..." (Zechariah 3:3). The devils in the insane men at Gergesa and Gadara could cry out and say "you are Jesus the Son of God" but they certainly could not say "Lord Jesus." For an individual to confess Jesus as God or as their Lord is to confess that there is no other God and that Jesus is their savior. Paul makes such a confession all that is necessary for salvation (Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9).

<sup>37</sup> The Greek word 'diareseis' is only found in these three verses in the New Testament. However, it is used 34 times in the Septuagint. It is translated by several Hebrew words. The first time that it appears in the Old Testament is in Joshua 19:51 where it translates the Hebrew word 'nachal' which means 'inheritance' or 'divisions'. The next time that it appears is in Judges 5:15-16 only this time it translates the Hebrew word 'pelaggah' which means 'divisions' or 'streams.' Then the third time is in 1 Chronicles 24:1 where it translates 'machlekah' which means 'course' or 'division' referring to the divisions of the Priesthood. The final time that it is observed in the Old Testament is in Psalms where it translated the Hebrew 'gazar' which means 'cut off' or 'divide' with respect to the miracle of the Red Sea (Psalms 136:13/ LXX 153:13). The common denominator in of all of these Hebrew words which 'diareseis' translates is 'division.' Division is

5 And there are divisions of ministry<sup>39</sup> yet the same Lord  
6 And there are divisions of activities<sup>40</sup> but the same God is activating all of these in everyone.

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one of the primary meanings of 'diareseis' in the Greek language. It may also be translated 'variety', 'difference' and 'apportionment'. The Greek word 'diareseis' is a noun derived from the verb 'diaireo' which means 'divide'.

<sup>38</sup> The best way to translate 'charismata' is "acts of grace." Charismata is the activity of the Holy Spirit through the life of those who have been born of Spirit and endowed with His power. It is the manifestation of the Spirit that is given to reveal the presence of the unseen Jesus (Mark 16:17; Matthew 18:20; 28:20). The word charismata is derived from the Greek root 'charis' which means 'grace'. Grace means far more than just favor, for grace is revealed to be the divine empowerment that supplies the saints with the ability to do and be everything that God has purposed for our lives. Grace may be extended to mean any divine act of God, which results in either His protection or help but more than anything else His empowerment of an individual. Charis (grace) may also be understood as the state that accompanies joy (chara). Charisma is the result of charis thus the 'ma' suffix and may also be understood as the proof of charis. Charisma (charismata is the plural form of charisma) is related to the Hebrew word 'chesed,' which means 'covenant love' (charisma translates chesed in the Septuagint). Paul uses charisma to describe the whole of salvation (Romans 5:15; 6:23).

Charismata is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit which is revealed as we interact with Jesus. We must be careful not to think of charismata as a 'gift' in the classical sense as though it was something that we possessed independent of the operation of the Holy Spirit. Without the direct working and manifestation of the Holy Spirit there is no charismata. One of the hallmark manifestations of Charismata is the tongues of fire and prophecy both of which are the immediate effects of the Holy Spirit at work through a yielded vessel (Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 12:6,11; Joel 2:28; Numbers 11:25; 1 Samuel 10:6). It is God's desire that we not lack any of the charismata (1 Corinthians 1:7). There are varieties of charismata manifested by the Holy Spirit through our lives as we yield to Him all for the purpose of revealing the presence of the rising Saviour Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:8-10; John 16:13-16). Finally, the charismata may be imparted by prophesy and the laying on of hands (1 Timothy 4:14). Although this word is used to refer to the gift of salvation in Romans 5:15,16 and 6:23 it is also used of the spiritual manifestations of prophecy, faith and ministry in Romans 12:6-7. Paul opens up his letter to the Corinthians with this word and recognizes that those at Corinth had the testimony of Christ confirmed in them by the 'charismata' (1:6-7). Charismata is used five times in the 12th chapter of 1 Corinthians all with respect to the activities of the Holy Spirit that are manifested as signs and wonders in the church for the purpose of revealing Jesus (1 Corinthians 12: 4,9,28,30,31). Because of the lack of reference to charismata outside of the New Testament we must rely on its usage in the New Testament to understand its meaning. Philo made a distinction between gift (dorea) and acts of grace (charisma), "For all things in the world and the world itself is a free gift (dorea) and act of kindness (euergesia) and grace (charisma) on God's part" Philo All. iii.78 Legum Allegoriae Balz, H. R., & Schneider, G. (1990-c1993)- Exegetical dictionary of the New Testament.

<sup>39</sup> The Greek word 'diakonia' is a common word in the New Testament occurring 34 times. It may be translated 'minister, service, attendance'. The first time it occurs in the New Testament is in Luke 10:40 with respect to Martha serving Jesus. The second time that it is used is in Acts 1:17 and is used with respect to the ministry of the 12 apostles. The first time that it is used in the epistles of Paul is in Romans 11:13 with respect to Paul's office as an apostle.

<sup>40</sup> The Greek noun 'energema' or 'energematōn' is unique to 1 Corinthians chapter 12. It only occurs twice in the Bible and in both instances it is found here and in verse 10. In both cases it is used in association to the working power of God. The Classical Greek Dictionary (Langenscheidt) equates it with 'energeia' which means 'activity', 'efficacy' or 'effect' a word used about eight times by Paul in Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians and Thessalonians. The English-Greek Lexicon of Semantic Domains expands the definition to include 'function' act' or 'deed'. It is first used with respect to the activity, doings or deeds of God who is at work in everyone (all in all) and then with respect to the working of dunamis (divine power). This Greek word is derived from a verb that also appears in this verse of scripture 'energeo' which means 'work'. The word 'energeo' has been described as the energy of God or "divine energy" (A.T. Robertson- 1 Corinthians 12:6). The 'energematōn' (workings) are the direct result of the 'energema' (working) of God. The way that 'energematōn' is used in verse 10 helps to shed additional light on the way that it should be translated here. It is used as the subject noun along with 'dunamis,' which is translated 'miracles' by the Authorize Version but means 'power.'

7 Now to everyone is given the manifestation<sup>41</sup> of the Spirit to profit<sup>42</sup>.

8 For through the Spirit is given a word of wisdom and by another a word of knowledge according to the Spirit.

9- By another faith by the Spirit and another gifts of healings<sup>43</sup> by the one Spirit.

10- And by another workings of miracles<sup>44</sup> and by another prophecy and by another discerning of spirits by others diversities of tongues and by others the ability to put the tongues into words<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> Paul includes all believers in the supernatural manifestation of the Spirit. The manifestations of the Spirit are clearly defined in scripture; in fact, Paul compiles a relatively complete list in this chapter. The manifestations of the Spirit are the activities of the Holy Spirit that only come as a result of being endued with power from God. The awesome reality is that the manifestations of the Holy Spirit are not limited to just a few people but are in fact given to every person in Christ. The subject of this chapter and chapter 14 is "the spiritual" and Paul made it clear when he wrote to the Ephesians that all of God's people are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies (Ephesians 1:3).

<sup>42</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Healing is at the forefront of the realms of the spiritual. It is God's will that every one of those who are called by His name eagerly desire the spiritual, "Pursue love and eagerly desire the spiritual and especially that you may prophesy" (1 Corinthians 14:1). The spiritual is the realm of the anointing where we learn to yield to the operation of the Holy Spirit in the functioning of the charismata of signs and wonders (1 Corinthians 2:13). We are to live consecrated lives to the realm of the spiritual in which the Holy Spirit leads us and guides us into all truth. It is in this realm that God perfects everything that concerns us and teaches us to love righteousness and hate iniquity. It is in this realm that we learn to let His rivers of life dominate us and flow out of us. In this realm of glory we are overwhelmed with a compassion for the needs of others and filled with the zeal of the Lord to see God's will done in this earth. The manifestations of the Spirit that flow out of this spiritual realm has been made available to every person. Furthermore, God has commanded us to greatly desire every expression of this realm (1 Corinthians 12:7). The one special grace or charismata that was expressed above all other gifts in the life of Jesus was the gift of healing. God has predestinated everyone of us who will comply with His will and be obedient to His word to function in this gift in a greater way than He did (John 14:12). The gift of healing is available for you and God wants you to be eager to function in it.

<sup>45</sup> The expression of tongues should turn into speech that can be understood by all. Surely this was the result that we observe with Peter who when after he was baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire began to declare the secrets of the scripture that had never before been revealed as they were at that moment (Acts 2:14-21). The activity of tongues is actually a communication of the Holy Spirit to us and through us. The expression of tongues not only effect our emotions, passions and attitudes but also our thinking realm and our ability to communicate. Through this wonderful activity of God that infuses us with divine speech we find ourselves operating in the mind of Christ rather than in our own limited understanding. A.C. Thiselton writes "the tongue speaker who is overwhelmed with the presence and love of God to the extent that praise and prayer flow forth in inarticulate sounds uttered by the tongue finds that, after all, he or she can put into words the ground of praise, prayer, joy, or longing, and thereby the church community as a whole can similarly receive this public ministry of building up" (Thiselton, A. C. (2000). *The First Epistle to the Corinthians : A commentary on the Greek text* (1099). Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans.)

The Greek word translated interpreter (*diermhneuo*) is recognized by the experts in linguistics as not being adequately translated by the word 'interpret.' Thiselton argues that this verse should be translated, "He who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to produce articulate speech" (Thiselton, A. C. (2000). *The First Epistle to the Corinthians : A commentary on the Greek text* (1098)). When Josephus was trying to express the wonders of Herod's temple he used this word to express his inability to put into words the beauty of the gardens and lavish decorations (Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 5.176). Philo describes the meaning of the word in relation to a poet who is divinely inspired and is lifted above the mind to speak higher inspiration. Philo also understands the meaning of this word based on Aaron's relationship with Moses. Aaron did not interpret what Moses said as though he spoke another language but instead Aaron "put into words" articulate communication what Moses felt himself unable to express (Philo, *Quod Deterius Potiori Insidiari Soleat* 15, 16; cf. Thiselton, "The 'Interpretation' of Tongues," 20-25).

- 11- And these are all activated by one and the same Spirit who distributes to each one individually according to his will<sup>46</sup>.
- 12- For just as the body is one yet has many members and all of the members of the body being one so also is the body of Christ.
- 13- For also by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body whether Jew or Greek whether slave or free and all drink of one Spirit<sup>47</sup>.
- 14- For also the body is not one member but many.
- 15- If the foot was to say, Because I am not the hand I am not of the body on account of this is it not of the body?
- 16- And if the ear says, Because I am not the eyes I am not of the but on account of this is it not of the body.
- 17 If the whole body were an eye who would hear; if the whole an ear who would see?
- 18 But as it is God placed the members each one of them in the body even as He has chosen<sup>48</sup>.

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<sup>46</sup> Everyone of the chrasmata are activated by the Holy Spirit. These manifestations of the Spirit do not take place according to our will but rather according to the will of God. It is God who activates all of these in everyone (vs. 6). He is the one who breaths in the inspiration and the ability to function in these demonstrations of power so that Jesus might be revealed, the gospel preached and the kingdom of God advanced (John 16:14; Acts 1:8; 4:33). The Holy Spirit who came to empower us so that Jesus might be revealed is the One who decides what should happen and when. This dynamic of dependency was demonstrated to us by Jesus who did nothing of Himself but only what he heard and saw the Father do (John 5:19, 30; 8:28; John 12:28). When the Holy Spirit came upon those gathered in the upper room they all began to speak with other tongues as He gave them the ability to speak (Acts 2:4). Paul reminded the Galatians that the one who worked miracles by the Spirit did so by the faith that was heard (Galatians 3:5). If we want to learn to function in the purity and glory of these acts which testify of the risen Savior then we must learn how to be lead by the Spirit and how to yield to Him in complete and total dependency to His will and to His way.

<sup>47</sup> The glory that was given to us by the Lord Jesus Christ has resulted in a miraculous oneness through the operation of the Holy Spirit (John 17:21-23). The Holy Spirit has taken us collectively and baptized us into one body: the body of Christ Jesus. Paul said to the Galatians that as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Galatians 3:27). Through this baptism, the expressions of the glory and power of Jesus Christ are manifested through us individually and collectively. However Paul does not focus on the individual expression of these gifts, but on the collective expression of these works of Christ in the church (1 Corinthians 12:7-11; 1 Corinthians 12:28). Each person in the church has the responsibility to submit themselves to this baptism into Christ. When we enter the church on every occasion, the Holy Spirit desires to baptize us into the body of Christ - so that the glorious church may manifest the person of the Lord Jesus. In order for this to be a reality, there must a submission and humility like that expressed when Jesus took towel and basin in hand and washed the disciples feet (John 13:12-14).

Paul couples drinking of the Spirit with being baptized into the body of Christ. When we drink of the Spirit, the rivers of God's life and power flow from our lives (John 7:38-39). The wellsprings of His goodness and nature bubble up from the depths of our being (John 4:14). It is here in this place of cooperating with the Holy Ghost that the realms of the miraculous life of Jesus are revealed. If we do not allow the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us, and take control of the our assemblies - then there will be no expression of the church, nor of Jesus, nor of the kingdom of God. We must recognize that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person; but unless we submit to Him and drink, there will be no river. We must honor the Holy Spirit, and realize that He wants to sovereignly divide these gifts to each person according to His will. He was sent to take all that belongs to Jesus and reveal it to us, so that the good things of God might be expressed through our lives (John 16:13). He has come to glorify Jesus; and without His work Jesus cannot be revealed. If we believe that the church is something that should be placed within the framework of what men can do out of their own abilities - we have altogether missed the message of the gospel.

<sup>48</sup> The authority structure in the church is God's choosing. The opportunities given to each person in the church community is decided by the Lord Himself (1 Corinthians 12:11). The pastor is there because God placed him there. The evangelist, the prophet the apostles, the working of miracles and the chrasmata of

- 19- And if they were all members who would have a body?  
20- And now indeed many members but one body.  
21- And the eye cannot say to the hand I have no need of you or again the head to the feet I have no need of you.  
22- But much more the members of the body seeming to be weaker are necessary.  
23- And those of the body which we think without honor upon these we place more abundant honor and the unattractive has more abundant appeal.  
24- And our attractive has no need but God has mixed together the lacking with the abundant to give honor to the body.  
25- That there may be no division in the body but that the members have the same care one for another.  
26- And if one member suffers all the members suffer if one member is glorified all the members rejoice.  
27 But you are the body of Christ and members in particular<sup>49</sup>.

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healing all functioning in our midst according to God's choice. These things take place because the members of the church are willing to be obedient to what God chooses. God gives to each person a divine grace according to a proportion of faith to operate in the realms of the Spirit whether it is prophecy, teaching, exhorting, or giving whatever the gifting may be it is what God has done and not man (Romans 12:6-8). Therefore, we must honor what God is doing realizing that it is His choice. Even though we may covet the gifts we can never be jealous of the individual functioning in the gift (1 Corinthians 12:31). Shouldn't we honor the person who is functioning in the church in the same way that God has honored them. We should be aware that they have been honored with a gifting that brings a blessing and maturity to the whole community and rejoice in it.

<sup>49</sup> There are many different opinions about how the church is to function, but the picture of the church in the New Testament should be the example that we follow. The church was born in the baptism of the fire of the Holy Spirit: endued with power to be witnesses of the resurrection. Everyone who was born of the Spirit was also baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ, to both experience and express His glory. The church is the body of Christ and intended to be the visible manifestation of Jesus on the earth today. The church should function with the full display of the power and glory of Jesus. Paul said the church was the fullness of God, with Christ Jesus being the head (Ephesians 1:22-23). The idea that the church can be defined with a liturgy and religious traditions is a departure from the truth that is described in the New Testament. When we define the church, we must understand it as the body of Christ, the fullness of God, and the revelation of Jesus Christ both - in nature and power.

Paul described how we were supposed to represent Jesus: in the demonstration of the Spirit and power (1 Corinthians 2:4; Romans 14:17; 1 Thessalonians 1:5). He described how the lost world would be impacted by the revelation of the secrets of their heart manifested through prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:12-14; 1 Corinthians 14:23-25). When Peter described the birth of the church and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, he quoted what the prophet Joel said: the Holy Spirit was poured out so that we may prophesy, see visions, and dream dreams (Acts 2:15-21; Acts 2:33,39; Acts 2:43; Acts 4:34; Acts 19:11-13). The church is described by Paul as being the place where the Holy Spirit divides to each person some manifestation of the gifts of power, which testify of the presence and authority of Jesus Christ. The church is the place where the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, the discerning of spirits, the working of miracles, the gifts of healing, the gift of faith, prophesy, tongues, and interpretation of tongues are to be experienced (1 Corinthians 12:7-11; 1 Corinthians 12:27-28).

Every person in the church must recognize their responsibility to yield to the Holy Ghost - in order to function as a member of the person of Jesus. Each one must give place to the flowing forth of the rivers of living water; otherwise the ministry of Jesus Christ will not be manifested. Where Jesus is not revealed by the working of the Holy Spirit, there is no church. Just because people go through the motions of gathering, singing songs, and reading the Bible, they think that they are having church - but they are mistaken. Oh that the people of God would become desperately hungry for a revival of those things that God designed and purposed the church to be! Let us return to the place of participating with the full manifestation of the Holy Ghost, who has come to reveal the person and power of the resurrected and exalted King of Kings and Lord of Lords: Christ Jesus.

28 And God set these in the church first apostles second prophets third teachers after that powers after that gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversity of languages

29 Not all apostles, not all prophets, not all teachers

30 Not everyone has a healing gift, not everyone speaks with tongues, not everyone interprets.

31 Now eagerly desire these extraordinary charismata and still also I will point out to you an excellent way<sup>50</sup>.

## Chapter 14

Theme: The church must be build up.

Audience: Everyone in the church.

Method: Speaking by the Spirit with words that can be understood either by revelation, knowledge, prophesy or teaching.

Issue: Excelling to utterances by the Spirit that can be understood.

1- Pursue love and earnestly desire<sup>51</sup> the spiritual<sup>52</sup> and especially that you prophesy.

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<sup>50</sup> We should all love to see people healed and the oppressed set free. There should be nothing more glorious to the people of God than sitting in the presence of Jesus. In this context the Holy Spirit does those things that reveal the glorious presence of Jesus, which Paul refers to as 'charismata' (acts of grace). Every one of us should have a desperate desire to see these acts of the Holy Spirit manifested in our lives, as well as in our meetings. We must also be aware of the fact that the divine disposition of love must be yielded to and cooperated with if the Holy Spirit is going to be free to reveal Jesus as He desires.

It is in this disposition and expression of love that we discover all of the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:17-19). In this wonderful and pleasant place of love we both discover the depths of God, and find ourselves dwelling in Him (1 John 4:12,16). Paul points out that better than just eagerly desiring these divine acts of grace, we are to walk in the love that will make the depths and splendor of the charismata a reality in our lives. If we walk in the love for God and in the love one for another, then there will be a unity in the midst of the diversity, that will result in an ever-increasing manifestation of the works of Jesus. Let us give ourselves to this witness that we are the children of God and the disciples of Jesus (John 13:35; 1 John 3:14; 1 John 5:1).

<sup>51</sup> The Greek word 'zeloo' may be simply translated "earnestly desire," but there seems to be more to the meaning of the word than just a strong desire. There should be such a devotion to having this manifestation of God's glory in our life, that we ourselves become intensely devoted to such a manifestation. Surely, nothing could make us more effective soul-winners than the divine ability to look into people's lives and speak directly by the Spirit to their need (1 Corinthians 14:24-25; John 1:47-49).

The Greek word used here may also be translated "strive, covet, or to be jealous." These words of course stir up within us a deeper emotion and commitment. Now, if we are going to be willing to exert ourselves to have something, then certainly we are going to devote ourselves to it in some manner. If we are deeply interested in having something, then surely it will occupy our thoughts. For example: we know how much the deep desire to have a husband or wife occupies the thoughts of a single man or woman. So if our earnestness to have the spiritual should take such an intense hold on our desires, surely we should have those things which God has desired for us.

<sup>52</sup> There is sufficient reason to believe that Paul uses "the spiritual" to refer to the utterance of tongues. The language of the Holy Spirit is the subject in this chapter, which is being contrasted with prophecy. Of course "the spiritual" can be expanded in this context to every expression of the Holy Spirit, but with a special emphasis on all of the utterance gifts. One thing is for certain: you cannot exclude tongues from the spiritual. Paul commands that the spiritual be earnestly desired, and finally that tongues not be prohibited in any way. He testified that he spoke in tongues more than anyone; and that tongues are to be used in prayer, singing, and prophesying (through tongues and interpretation of tongues) (1 Corinthians 14:5,14-18,27).



2 Indeed he who speaks the language speaks not to man but to God for indeed no one perceives but the Spirit speaks mysteries.

3 But he who prophesies speaks to build up, aid and exhort man.

4 The one who speak the language strengthens themselves but the one who prophesies strengthens the church<sup>53</sup>.

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The things of the Spirit are so wonderful that we should earnestly desire them. Why is it then that so many regard that which is wonderful as an embarrassment, and even foolishness? Too many relate more to that which man can do without the Holy Spirit than to those things that are purely heavenly. Most commentaries will gloss over Paul's intense emotion expressed in "earnestly desiring the spiritual," and they move right on to prophecy. They will then reduce prophecy to good insightful preaching that has been properly prepared through applied hermeneutical and exegetical processes. Well, if someone can learn to do any dimension of the spiritual from men, then they can learn to move mountains and raise the dead from man as well. Be certain that the utterance of the spiritual can only be taught by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 12:10,21,28; Isaiah 28:11).

As with all things spiritual, the language of the Spirit comes from the Holy Ghost - not from men. It is a divine utterance supplied by the Holy Spirit, not to be controlled by man. It serves to strengthen those who flow in it to function in other divine abilities and purposes of God. It is a part of worship as much as prayer and singing, and is the expression of giving thanks excellently (1 Corinthians 14:15-17). The language of the Spirit can extend beyond worship and be a part of prophecy and the unveiling of the will of God: when tongues are uttered for the purpose of a message, and then interpreted. There is no way that anyone can learn this from man; it must be taught by God. To make tongues only for a message is a violation of this text, because Paul opens up with the reality that those who speak in tongues speak not to men but unto God, as they speak unknown things in the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:2). The spiritual activity of tongues is for speaking to God, being strengthened in the Holy Spirit, prayer, singing, giving thanks; and also for a message to be interpreted under special circumstances.

<sup>53</sup> There are two very important dimensions to the operation of the Spirit mentioned here: the strengthening of the individual, and the strengthening of the church. Whether it is the utterance of the language or the utterance of prophecy, both take place because we know how to yield to the Holy Spirit. These are the things that the Holy Spirit is doing, not man; and the Holy Spirit should be given total control of our meetings if we are to function as the church.

The language (or tongues) of the Spirit, were placed in the church by God (Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 29; 14:26; Ephesians 5:18-20). They are equally essential to the functioning of the church. In fact, tongues are the first manifestation of the Spirit in the church (Acts 2:4). It is also important that we recognize that Paul demanded that no one be forbidden to speak with tongues in the church (1 Corinthians 14:38). Paul also made mention that everyone in the church should have the manifestation of Spirit, in every dimension of His operation, in the context of the meeting (1 Corinthians 14:1,24,26,31).

There is also a difference between collectively speaking in the language, and speaking one by one in the context of giving a message (1 Corinthians 14:15-16; 27-28). For a similar reason those who prophesy should do so one by one, so that the message can be clearly heard and understood (1 Corinthians 14:31). Similarly, women (who at that time were not privileged with an education) should not ask questions and create a distraction from the message.

What should we do then in the church? We should pray with the understanding, and we should also pray with the spiritual (language). We should sing with the understanding, and also with the language (1 Corinthians 14:15). Of course this glorious functioning of the Spirit is almost entirely lost to the churches today. This is not something that just one or two people should be doing; but that the whole congregation should do (Acts 2:4; 10:45-46; Ephesians 5:18-20; Romans 15:6). In many places the only thing that the whole congregation does in unison is something that they read out of a book; whether it is a prayer that someone else wrote, or a song that someone else received. Well how about the song of the Spirit and the prayer of the Spirit - will we refuse to give place to the Holy Ghost? The church at Corinth may have devoted more time to speaking in tongues than they should have, but one thing is for certain: they had the other gifts as well. Unfortunately, many churches neither have the tongues, nor any other manifestations of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12: 8-10; 28-29; 14:26). If we desire the baptism of Jesus in the Holy Spirit and all of the other manifestations of the Holy Spirit's power in our lives, and in our meetings; then we should

**5 I want all of you to speak with tongues<sup>54</sup> and more that you prophesy<sup>55</sup> because he is greater who prophesies than he who speaks with tongues unless he interprets that the church may be edified<sup>56</sup>.**

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accept the baptism and flow of the Spirit that brought them to the church (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5,8; 2:3-4; 10:46; 19:6).

<sup>54</sup> It was Paul's desire that everyone speak in tongues. In fact, one may argue that the Greek word 'thelo' should be translated "I take pleasure in" (see- The New International Greek Testament Commentary on 1 Corinthians 15:5, paragraph 3). Paul opens this chapter with a very pointed commission for those in the church to follow after love, desire the spiritual and even more or ultimately prophesy. He makes known to the church that they should sing in tongues and pray in tongues as well as with the understanding (prophecy) and that certainly is to be done collectively in the context of the church (vs. 15). He boast of speaking in tongues more than anyone and demands that no one forbid the speaking of tongues in the church (vs. 18, 39)

One of the things that many times is lacking is an understanding of the role of this manifestation of the Holy Spirit. It was the first manifestation given to the New Testament church that revealed that the Holy Spirit had come and was in charge (Acts 2:4). It is the manifestation equated with rivers of living water, the receiving of power from on High, and the baptism in the Holy Ghost and Fire (John 7:39; Acts 1:5,8). It is one of the signs that God gave to the believers (Mark 16:17). Yet more importantly, tongues is a realm where we yield to the Holy Spirit and are taught by Him to function in the things of the Spirit. We become saturated with His expression in every dimension of our spirit, soul and body. It is a realm where we are strengthened in our most holy faith, which is a faith of signs and wonders as well as communion with God (Jude 20).

Baptism in the Holy Spirit was of chief importance to Paul. When He came upon men at Ephesus the first thing that he asked them is "did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers" (Acts 19:2)? He then laid hands on them and as soon as they received the Holy Spirit they began to speak in tongues (Acts 19:6). The same thing happened to the men in Ephesus as happened to the 120 on the day of Pentecost and to the house of Cornelius when the Holy Spirit fell upon the Gentiles. There was a sign that the Holy Spirit had been poured out and was in operation and that sign was tongues. However, to the one under the influence it is more than a sign it is a miracle working power that takes our emotions, passions, attitudes and abilities into a union with God. It is a place where God teaches us to both yield to and function in the operation of the Spirit that goes beyond the communication of what we could learn to do otherwise.

In the Old Testament when the Spirit came upon the people they prophesied in the New Testament they speak with tongues and prophesy but the tongues come first. It is the only manifestation of the Spirit of God that is not found in the Old Testament. It belongs solely to the church and testifies of the ascension of Jesus, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the teacher, and of the transformed nature of the redeemed. When the saints received power they spoke with tongues and it was the tongues then that released the demonstration of power through their lives by the Holy Spirit.

Finally, it is important to recognize that there is a difference between operating in tongues for the sake of prayer and worship versus delivering a message (1 Corinthians 14:2, 15, 27). Therefore it is important that each person realize that the message be given one at a time so that everyone can hear what is being said. If you have ever been in a place where these manifestations are in operation you would understand that the glory and manifestation of it falls upon everyone that is receptive instantaneously just as it happened in Acts chapter 2. What people have to learn is that when tongues function in the role of a message then it needs to be done one at a time and then an interpretation given. It is actually fairly straight forward: when everyone is praying or singing the rapture of the language creates no distraction at all but when someone wants to speak in tongues overtop of the preacher or the one prophesying then this creates confusion. Personally anytime I sing in tongues it always results in a song of the understanding as well so then the church can both join into the singing in the spirit and then profit as well from the singing with the words that we all can understand. The same is true of prayer, even though I may pray for an hour before the understanding is quickened and comes under the same influence to speak out those things being both inspired and directed by the Holy Spirit. Certainly as one matures in the realms of the spiritual the tongues should always flow over into prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:12).

<sup>55</sup> Fundamentally, the definition of prophecy is for one to speak the word of God. However, to prophecy one does not have to be a prophet. On several significant occasions in the Old Testament when the Spirit of the Lord came upon someone to anoint them with special abilities the first thing that happened was that they prophesied. One example is when the 70 were anointed to judge Israel under Moses they were given a

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special anointing (divine ability) in order to function as judges in Israel. Although, they were not being anointed to prophecy the witness that the Spirit had come upon them was that they all began to prophecy (Numbers 11:25). The New Testament Church could not begin until the Holy Spirit who was to preside over the Church came. When the Holy Spirit came to the Church His Spirit was poured out upon the whole congregation. When His Spirit was poured out they all began to speak with tongues of fire. Peter declares that this was the evidence of the Spirit being poured out on all flesh as spoken by the prophet Joel and by context prophecy is implied (Acts 2:16-18). The most important attribute of these tongues is that in their interpretation it was discovered to be worship and adoration of God (Acts 2:11). The attribute of worship in prophecy is also observed in the Old Testament. David equipped those who were appointed to prophecy to do so on the harp, psaltries and cymbals (1 Chronicles 25:1-3). The integration of worship in prophecy was also observed in the school of the prophets started by Samuel. When Saul met the company of prophets worshipping and prophesying, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he was endued with power to be a King (1 Samuel 10:5-7). When Miriam the sister of Moses prophesied she took tamborene and began to worship God with the song of prophecy (Exodus 15:20-21). Many people wonder what is this New Testament tongues all about? What is its significance? One of the more important attributes of New Testament tongues is brought out by the Apostle Paul, who spoke in tongues more than anyone, at least in the Corinthian Church. Paul revealed that when a person speaks in tongues they speak not unto men but unto God (1 Corinthians 14:2). What are they saying? They are giving thanks and worshipping God just as it was on the day of Pentecost (1 Corinthians 14:16-17). Is it okay to pray and sing in these tongues of the Spirit, certainly (1 Corinthians 14:15). Should each individual excel to reduce into words what is being spoken? Yes! Is it absolutely essential? No! There must be a place given for those who are baptized in the Holy Ghost and fire to excel unto prophecy. This precedence was set on the day of Pentecost for there were those in the great crowd of people that did not hear the interpretation of the tongues (Acts 2:13). When the house of Cornelius was baptized in the Holy Ghost and fire they all spoke with tongues and Peter and those with them heard them magnify God. However, nothing is said concerning an interpretation (Acts 10:46). When the disciples at Ephesus were baptized in the Holy Ghost they spoke with tongues and prophesied but once again nothing is specifically mentioned of interpreting the tongues (Acts 19:6). These conclusions do not contradict what Paul has to say in the rules of 1 Corinthians 14. It is Paul's desire that everyone speaks with tongues and prophecies. He further underscores that tongues are not to be forbidden (1 Corinthians 14:39). The primary points that Paul makes regarding the interpretation of tongues is concerning a message in tongues in the place of a sermon (1 Corinthians 14: 19, 27-32).

<sup>56</sup> The church began with the event of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which was accompanied by tongues (the language of the Spirit). The language of the Spirit was a new kind of prophecy, which would mature into an understanding of how to participate with the Holy Ghost in an unlimited way. When these rivers began to flood the souls of the 120, it was the witness that Jesus had been exalted to the right hand of God (Acts 2:33; John 7:38-39). It was the witness that the baptismal ministry of Jesus had begun and that the Holy Spirit was now given without measure (Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5). This special gift was placed front and center in terms of what God now purposes to do in the midst of His church. Tongues belong in the church - since they were placed there by the Lord Jesus and function as the utterance of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 12:10,28, Mark 16:17). Now in 1 Corinthians 14, Paul, who spoke in tongues more than everyone, gives 16 reasons why we should speak in tongues as well in the church:

- 1- We are to desire the spiritual, and tongues exemplifies the spiritual (1 Corinthians 14:1,12).
- 2- He that speaks in tongues speaks to God in a direct way that allows for the mysteries of God to be spoken. There would be no way for Paul to give tongues a higher status than to refer to it as the activity of our spirit speaking directly to God by the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 14:2).
- 3- When we speak in tongues, we strengthen ourselves in the things of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:4).
- 4- It was Paul's desire that we all speak with tongues, and no one knew better what was needed in the church (1 Corinthians 14:5).
- 5- Tongues will excel to the interpretation of tongues; therefore if there are no tongues, then we would be deprived of a special realm of prophecy: the interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 14:12-13,27).
- 6- When we pray in tongues, our spirits are engaged in prayer to God (1 Corinthians 14:14).
- 7- Without tongues we would not be able to pray in the Spirit, which leads to praying in the understanding (1 Corinthians 14:15).
- 8- Without tongues we would not be able to sing in the Spirit, which then leads to singing in the understanding (1 Corinthians 14:15).

6 And now brethren if I come to you speaking the language which of you will benefit unless if I speak to you by revelation or by knowledge or by prophesy or by teaching<sup>57</sup>.

7 But yet there are lifeless things giving a sound whether the flute or the harp if there distinction of sound is not giving who will recognize that a flute is played or a harp is played.

8 And also if a trumpet gives an uncertain sound who can prepare unto battle.

9 Also if you through the language do not give clear words who shall know what was spoken for you are speaking into the air.

10 There are so many kinds of voices in the world and none are without a sound.

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9- When we speak with tongues, we bless with the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:16).

10- When we speak with tongues, we give thanks (1 Corinthians 14:16).

11- When we speak with tongues, we give thanks excellently (1 Corinthians 14:17).

12- Paul, an example that we should all follow, spoke in tongues more than everyone.

13- Speaking in tongues is the fulfillment of prophecy, which revealed that God would speak through His people in a special way (1 Corinthians 14:21).

14- Speaking in tongues is a sign for the unbeliever: it is a revelation that the New Covenant has begun (1 Corinthians 14:22; Acts 2:33).

15- When we assemble in the church, everyone should have the expression of tongues (1 Corinthians 14:26).

16- Tongues is the first expression of the Holy Spirit in the church, and no one has the right to forbid it (1 Corinthians 14:39; Acts 2:3-4).

<sup>57</sup> There has been much confusion about the utterance of the language of the Spirit. Many good folks have some interesting preconceived ideas as to what an interpretation is suppose to look and sound like. Many believe that there has to be a little space of silence then suddenly some one starts shouting, “thus saith the Lord” like the prophets of old. It does not have to work like that. The language of the Spirit brings revelation, knowledge, prophecy and doctrine. There is a divine hook up in the gift of tongues as was exemplified on the day of Pentecost and out of that flows the things that the Holy Spirit would reveal that is interpretation. When we define interpretation it may extend beyond many peoples definitions so everyone needs to just be a little more flexible and develop a sensitivity to what God is doing. We pray in the Spirit under the influence of the Holy Ghost to know what we are to speak and what we are to do. Through the activity of the Spirit we are strengthened and built up to move in signs, wonders and miracles. All tongues should excel to these revelatory expressions so that everyone can be edified by what God says and not men.

When we truly understand the precedence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the expression of the language the dynamics change. Many run the risk of confining to narrowly what God will do by creating in their own imagination a wrong notion of what took place. The scripture says they all begin to speak with other tongues as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. There were about 120 people all speaking with the language of the Spirit. Then out of that voice of heaven more than 3000 people heard in their own language what the 120 were speaking. There is no way that anyone can take the element of the miracle and sign and wonder out of this event and be right. There was no suggestion that there was in any way the classical approach to the speaking in tongues and then an interpretation rather, more than 14 dialects heard simultaneously in their own language what about 120 people were all saying at once.

Those groups who refuse to have tongues or who suppress the utterance of tongues in their meetings don't have much prophecy rarely is there an interpretation and in large part there is a lack of signs wonders and miracles. They say that they want everything to be decent and in order but the question is what order are they looking for, divine order? In reality anything that goes on in a church service that is not under the direction of the Holy Spirit is out of order. If the order of the service does not result in the manifestation of the Spirit then there is an order problem. (1Corinthians 12:7-11). Everyone should be more concerned about what they don't have that God demands rather than a few expressions that they don't understand. There is no limitation to how much prophesy can take place in a meeting as everyone may prophesy one by one (1 Corinthians 14:31). Our meetings need to change and be filled with the expressions of the Holy Spirit if we are going to function as the church. The only issue that Paul raises in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 was that the church service must not be a continual utterance of tongues with no interpretation.

11 Therefore if I do not know the power of the voice, the one speaking is a barbarian and my speech is barbarous.

12 And therefore because you are spiritually zealous seek to have the overflow that you may build up the church.

13 Therefore he who speaks in a tongue should pray to put it into words<sup>58</sup>.

14 For indeed if I pray in the language my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful.

15 What shall be done? I will pray with the Spirit and will understand with the understanding also I will sing with the Spirit and will sing with the understanding also<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>58</sup> The interpretation of tongues is different than we might think at first glance. The Greek word that is used for this gift is 'diemeneuo.' The usage of this word by Josephus and Philo conveys a meaning different from just providing a translation by interpreting one language into another. The word 'diemeneuo' may be understood as "to put into words", or "bring to articulate expressions" (The Anchor Bible Dictionary- Gift of Tongues). The interpretation of tongues is first observed in Acts 2:7-8, where the miracle of tongues sounds like the native language of a diverse group of people. Many of those who were gathered around were able to hear what the disciples were saying in their own language. The text suggests to us by the use of the word "hear" instead of "speaking" that although the disciples were speaking in the tongues of the Spirit many of the people who were present heard what they were saying in their own language. Thus the miracle of interpretation rested in the hearing and not in the speaking, "Amazed and astonished they ask, Are not all of these speaking Galileans. And how is it that we hear each in our own native language." In this event there were those in the crowd who did not even hear the disciples speaking in "tongues" but in their native language even though the disciples were in fact speaking in tongues. At the same time there were others standing in the crowd that only heard the utterance of stammering lips and other tongues and mocked saying, "They are filled with new wine" (Acts 2:13). The gift of tongues is the first utterance of the Holy Spirit that comes out of the river of God (John 7:38-39; Acts 2:4,33). It is the results of the fire of God coming upon the tongue and lips of man (Acts 1:5; 2:3). These tongues of fire fill every dimension of man's being with every syllable spoken. The fire of God produces utterances from the heart that teach men to speak out of the Spirit instead of the intellect and brings forth revelation, knowledge, prophecy and teaching (1 Corinthians 14:6). It is viewed as a kind of, New Testament prophecy as explained by Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:13-19). Paul reveals it to be the means by which we speak directly to God in the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:2). It is an expression of the Spirit that bypasses the intellect of man and affects every realm of man's being and at the same time should distill into an utterance of prophecy that can be understood by all. The utterance that everyone can understand would be as unknown to the speaker and as absent from his intellect as the tongues itself.

<sup>59</sup> Praying in the Holy Ghost is a wonderful part of the new creation. The Holy Spirit Himself makes intercession through us as He prays concerning the things that we need, according to the will of the Father and the mind of Christ (Romans 8:26-27). Allowing the Holy Spirit to take control of those things that we pray for with all prayer and supplication is an amazing gift (Ephesians 6:18). The heavenly and supernatural activity of the Holy Ghost praying through us will quiet our lives and still everything around us, so that we can hear those things that the Spirit of God is saying within us. The prayer of the Holy Spirit has two expressions: one is the language that no man understands, and the other is the prayer that is in our own tongue (1 Corinthians 14:2). These two expressions of prayer should always accompany one another in those who have allowed the Holy Spirit to mature their prayer life.

We are to seek the things belonging to the kingdom of God, and prayer is one of the foremost activities of the Spirit and one of our primary responsibilities in the kingdom of the Dear Son and of God (Colossians 1:13; Matthew 6:33). The prayer of the Holy Spirit activates faith, and a prayer life activates a life of faith: mountain-moving, nation-changing, soul-winning, heaven-revealing, miracle faith (John 11:41-44; Matthew 14:19-21; Luke 9:28-29; Mark 11:23-24; 1 Corinthians 12:9; Galatians 5:22; Jude 1:20; Matthew 7:7-11).

These things pertaining to the kingdom of God and the working of the Holy Spirit are supposed to be taught to us in church. Unfortunately in many places, prayer is a very small part of the activities of the "house of prayer." Rarely will you find anyone who yields the meetings to the Holy Spirit in such a way that the people are not only praying in the Holy Spirit, but also singing in the Holy Spirit. Instead, we find many who want to argue about form and style. Even worse, doctrines of men have set themselves against the prayer and praise of the Spirit in the church; calling it out of order. They argue that there needs to be an interpreter, and that it is offensive and a stumbling block. We hear much about man-made order and an

16 Because although you may speak well in the Spirit how shall they that fill up the place of the unskilled say amen upon your praise seeing that what you have spoken is not known.

17 For you truly praise well but the others are not built up.

18 I praise God speaking with the language more than every one of you.

19 But in the church I will speak five words with the understanding that speaking also the others may learn than 10,000 words with the language.

20 Brothers do not be children in your thinking but in malice babies and in your thinking be perfect.

21 In the law it has been written that in another tongue and by other lips I will speak to this people and neither in this way will they listen to me says the Lord.

22 Therefore the language is for a sign not for those who believe but the unbeliever and prophesy is not for the unbeliever but the believer.

23 Therefore if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks with tongues and one comes in unlearned or unbelieving will they not say that you are mad?

24 But if all prophesy and an unbeliever or unlearned person enters that one is convinced by all, examined by all

25 And thereby the secrets of his heart being manifested and then falling down upon his face worshipping he declares God is truly among you<sup>60</sup>.

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interpreter, but very little about someone praying in the Holy Ghost and also praying with the understanding also. In so doing, many church services end up with very little manifestation of the Spirit and the kingdom of God in their meetings. Men so grieve the Holy Spirit with their hardness of heart that they have no tongue, no interpreter, and no manifestation of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). The order of the church has been man-made order for so long that the order of the Holy Ghost is not even recognized, and even worse is despised.

It is high time that we repent of our sensual and self-serving doctrines, and turn back to God. We must allow the fires of the Holy Spirit to burn bright once again in the assembly of the saints. We must throw down the idols of self-will, and allow the Holy Spirit to take control of our lives individually - and as a result our church meetings as well. Then our obscurity and defeat will be driven back, and the light and life of Jesus will once again shine bright in a world of sin and darkness.

<sup>60</sup> Each person in the church who has been born of God carries a responsibility to function in the realms of the Spirit so that the kingdom of God can be revealed to those who do not believe or do not understand the gospel. Each person in the church is to be so full of the Spirit that the words of life and revelation proceed from their mouths revealing the secrets of the hearts of men. The example that Paul gives is similar to what happened when Nathaniel encountered Jesus. Jesus revealed the secrets of Nathaniel's heart and Nathaniel became a believer and worshipped Jesus (John 1:46-49).

We must realize that we were not called to live a "Christian life" we were called to live the life of Jesus. God has given every person a special anointing to live in Christ (1 John 2:27; John 15:1-5; Phillipians 1:21; John 17:21-13). The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every person so that each may function in the authority of the kingdom (1 Corinthians 12:7; John 7:38-39; Luke 24:49; Acts 2:4,16-18, 39). God is not looking for orators or performers He is looking for yielded vessels that He can fill with His Spirit who will speak all the words of this life and bring the gospel of salvation to all mankind (1 Corinthians 2:4,13; 14:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:5).

Every person who has been born of the Spirit of God has a responsibility to walk in the Spirit. We are responsible above all other things to come into the assembly of the saints filled with the Spirit. Unfortunately, many of Gods people return time and time again to the church with the same burdens, cares and afflictions when they should be shinning with the glory of Jesus and functioning in the authority and power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 3:19; Isaiah 60:1; 1 Corinthians 12:7; John 14:12; 2 Corinthians 3:18). To much time is having to be devoted to suffering, complaining babies in Christ who should by now be living epistles walking in the glory of the fruits of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:3; Galatians 5:22-25). It time to take up our responsibility in Christ and walk in the light as He is in the light and show forth the praises of the One who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

26 What should be done then my brethren whenever you assemble each one of you should have a song of praise, a teaching, a tongue, a revelation, an interpretation- all to produce a building up<sup>61</sup>.

27 If someone speaks in a tongue after two or as many as three and in turn then let one put it into words<sup>62</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup> There is a powerful impact on the unbeliever and the unlearned when the people of God flow in the Spirit (vss 24-25). If the church is going to be an assembly in which everyone has the overflow of the Spirit in their lives then each person is going to have to learn how to receive from God. Paul gives instructions to both the church at Ephesus and at Colosse on how to have the overflow of the Spirit in their lives. To the church at Colosse he says "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" and to the church at Ephesus he says "be filled with the Spirit" (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:18). In both cases he reveals that there will be the song of praise, hymns and spiritual songs coming forth from the heart. Jesus said that if we would drink of the spiritual water that it would produce the expressions of the Holy Spirit flowing out of us like the rushing streams of rivers flowing together (John 7:38-39).

If the word of Christ is going to dwell in us then we are going to have to give ourselves to knowing the word of Christ. We are to be a light unto the world a city set upon a hill in our conduct and behavior. We are those who are suppose to lead the world into the kingdom of God by our deeds but if we do not allow the word of God to govern our actions and how will this ever be a reality? The word of Christ, which is a synonym for the word of God, activates the outworking of the power of God in our lives as much as being filled with Spirit activates the outworking of the nature and manner of God. We both instances we are drinking of the spiritual water that produces the rivers of living water.

All of the good things of God are expressed through a relationship with God in the Holy Ghost. If we are neglectful of this relationship then we are going to forfeit all the good things of God that have been made available to us. We will be stuck in the world of human effort and ritual and all the world around us will see is religion and the stale actions of man instead of the glory of God manifested by the working of the word and the Spirit of God. If we will allow God to teach us to be conformed to His word and His Spirit then those things that we speak will be filled with the power and authority of God and the things that we do will be the expressions of the nature and glory of God.

<sup>62</sup> Now the most important distinction that must be made is the difference between the prayer and song of verse 15; and the message that is being referred to here. The spiritual prayer and song are the giving forth of praise in an excellent or perfect way, but those who are unlearned cannot profit from it. Yet, at the same time that does not mean that it should not be done; for in the same verse Paul declares that it should be done. Also, as we have previously stated, even the prayer and the song may distil into a divine utterance that everyone can profit from.

According to verse 13, the one who speaks should pray that the tongue that is being manifested may be put into words. In this verse, many translations make it sound as though there should be someone sitting around who knows how to put the tongues into words; but this is not necessarily the case: "However, we have argued consistently that all (or at least virtually all) the relevant passages in 12:1-14:26 which use 'diernhneuo' or 'ermhneow' (especially 14:6 and 14:13) are more likely to refer to the persons who speak in tongues as themselves articulating what had otherwise been inexpressible in everyday speech" (The New International Greek Testament Commentary). In fact, it is the person who is speaking in a tongue that should allow the manifestation to develop to the point that the divine speech is put into a divine message; such that the whole church can spiritually benefit and mature through. Additionally, neither is Paul limiting the number of occurrences of this manifestation, for he has already made room for everyone to participate in verse 26: "Two or at most three: the Greek implies that Paul means 'on each occasion.' Verse 31 shows that Paul is not suggesting a limitation in the number of Christian prophets in the community" (A handbook on Paul's first letter to the Corinthians). It must be remembered that the miraculous speech turned into a miraculous message for Peter on the day of Pentecost, and this should be the same result for us today. However, to conclude that somehow the speaker is in charge of the miraculous activity of the Holy Spirit's expression of tongues would require us to conclude that the individual is also in control of the miracles, healings, and all the other wonders - which we know is certainly not the case. These are the manifestations of the Spirit; not the manifestations of a person.

There are those who adamantly argue that tongues should be done in a private place, and that they serve no public good. However, this could not be further from the truth. It was this manifestation, above all others, that the Holy Spirit baptized the church community in on the day of Pentecost. Therefore, by precedence, it

28 But if there is no one who can put it into words<sup>63</sup> keep silent in the church and speak to himself and to God.

29 Let two or three prophets speak and the others judge<sup>64</sup>.

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is for the church assembly. Also, Paul is addressing the manifestation in the assembly; and is not forbidding it, but only putting into place certain regulations for the good of the assembly. Furthermore, the manifestation was also demonstrated by the Holy Spirit before the eyes of the general public in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, and further described by Paul as a sign for the unbeliever. If this is something that a saint is to do in the privacy of their own lives, then all of these scriptures and examples are meaningless (Mark 16:17; Acts 2:6-13; 10:46; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28; 14:5, 15, 22, 26, 27, 39).

<sup>63</sup> The expression of tongues should turn into speech that can be understood by all. Surely this was the result that we observe with Peter who when after he was baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire began to declare the secrets of the scripture that had never before been revealed as they were at that moment (Acts 2:14-21). The activity of tongues is actually a communication of the Holy Spirit to us and through us. The expression of tongues not only effect our emotions, passions and attitudes but also our thinking realm and our ability to communicate. Through this wonderful activity of God that infuses us with divine speech we find ourselves operating in the mind of Christ rather than in our own limited understanding. A.C. Thisleton writes "the tongue speaker who is overwhelmed with the presence and love of God to the extent that praise and prayer flow forth in inarticulate sounds uttered by the tongue finds that, after all, he or she can put into words the ground of praise, prayer, joy, or longing, and thereby the church community as a whole can similarly receive this public ministry of building up"

(Thisleton, A. C. (2000). *The First Epistle to the Corinthians : A commentary on the Greek text* (1099). Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans.)

The Greek word translated interpreter (*diermhneuo*) is recognized by the experts in linguistics as not being adequately translated by the word 'interpret.' Thisleton argues that this verse should be translated, "He who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to produce articulate speech" (Thisleton, A. C. (2000). *The First Epistle to the Corinthians : A commentary on the Greek text* (1098)). When Josephus was trying to express the wonders of Herod's temple he used this word to express his inability to put into words the beauty of the gardens and lavish decorations (Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 5.176). Philo describes the meaning of the word in relation to a poet who is divinely inspired and is lifted above the mind to speak higher inspiration. Philo also understands the meaning of this word based on Aaron's relationship with Moses. Aaron did not interpret what Moses said as though he spoke another language but instead Aaron "put into words" articulate communication what Moses felt himself unable to express (Philo, *Quod Deterius Potiori Insidiari Soleat* 15, 16; cf. Thisleton, "The 'Interpretation' of Tongues," 20-25).

<sup>64</sup> The Word of God - as it is only expressed in the Bible - is unequivocally established by God as the absolute and final authority in the church. When we look back at the school of the prophets that was established as a help to Moses, we can learn much about the purpose of such an office; as well as the function of prophecy. Moses needed help to teach and instruct all the people in Israel in the ways of the Lord. Therefore the Lord commanded Moses to appoint seventy men to receive of the Spirit that was given to Him, so that they would be able to both teach and preach the judgments of the Lord (Numbers 11:16; Numbers 11:24-26). Unlike those who had previously been appointed for judicial and administrative tasks, the seventy were to bear the responsibility for spiritual leadership (Exodus 18:25-26). Therefore, it was essential that they speak by the Spirit of the Lord; and thus the gift of prophesy was given to others besides Moses as they stood at the door of the tabernacle: the place of sacrifice and revelation (Exodus 33:9-11; Leviticus 1:1-3).

Paul does not limit prophesying to prophets, but rather desires that everyone prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:1,5; 1 Corinthians 14:24-25; 1 Corinthians 14:31). After all, the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church so that we all may receive the gift of prophecy, and speak by the Spirit of God (Acts 2:17; Joel 2:28). It was also Paul's desire that everyone be enriched with all utterance, and that no one come behind in any of the gifts (1 Corinthians 1:5,7). Yet in this passage Paul identifies those who are prophesying as prophets (Gr-'prophetes'). Paul desired that two or three prophets speak; and then for it to be evaluated. When anything is being examined as right or wrong, two or three witnesses are needed (Matthew 18:16; John 8:17-18; 2 Corinthians 13:1).

Prophecy is given to unveil the word of God. As the word of God is unveiled, the hearts of the hearers are revealed. Therefore, when one prophesies by the Spirit, then the known word of God is being preached with revelation and power. Of course, if a person does not speak according to the Word, then it is because there is no light of truth in them (Isaiah 8:20; Galatians 1:8-9). Prophecy is also given to reveal the secrets



30 And if another setting by has a revelation the first<sup>65</sup> keep silent.  
 31 For you can all prophecy one by one that all may learn and all may be exhorted.  
 32 And the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets.  
 33 For He is not the God of confusion but Peace as in all of the churches of the saints.  
 34 The women in the church keep silent for you should not permit them to talk but be in submission even also the law says.  
 35 But if any of them desire to learn they shall question their husbands at home for it is a shame for women to talk in church.  
 36 Or did the word of God go out from you? Or did it only reach to you?  
 37 If anyone is thought to be a prophet or spiritual acknowledge that which I write you that it is the Lords commandment.  
 38 And if anyone be ignorant let him be ignorant.  
 39 So then my brethren earnestly desire to prophesy and do not hinder speaking in tongues<sup>66</sup>.

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of men's hearts (1 Corinthians 14:25). This is not necessarily the word of knowledge that reveals personal and private information; because we know that the word of God exposes the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4:12). Of course, both the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge (along with prophecy) should be common in the church (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

The one thing that we have to be careful about is directive prophecy. With the exception of Jesus, all other direction given in the church was through a company of those called to spiritual leadership in the church. One example of this divine order is given to us in the book of Acts. When Paul was ready to be sent out by the church, the Scripture says that the Holy Spirit said: "Separate unto me Paul and Barnabas for the work that I have called them unto. Then after they fasted and prayed, THEY laid hands on them and sent them out" (Acts 13:2-3). There are too many people running around appointing themselves to the ministry, and appointing others to do this thing and that thing - without any witness. The worst thing is that too many of God's people allow these things contrary to divine order to exist. We all must recognize that things must be submitted - so that others can judge. When Peter had preached to the Gentiles and those at Cornelius's house, they were both saved and baptized in the Holy Ghost; but Peter still submitted it to the church for them to judge (Acts 11:1-18). Paul also allowed himself to be examined by the leadership of the church, so that he would not run or labor in vain (Galatians 2:2). The very nature of Christ is submission and humility. We must be transparent and recognize that God has called us to be submitted one to another, as we walk out this glorious and divine purpose of God for His church.

<sup>65</sup> The first probably refers to a prophet

<sup>66</sup> The 14 chapter of 1 Corinthians ends much in the same way it began. There are a number of things that church order demands the saints to be aware of but not at the expense of the manifestation of the Spirit. The bottom line is that every saint of God should earnestly desire the spiritual and they should earnestly desire to prophesy. Every saint should recognize that we are living in the last days and as God has promised He has poured out His Spirit on all flesh (Acts 2:14-18). When the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the church the only vocal gift that was heard was the utterances of tongues. However, tongues lead Peter into a realm, just as it did Paul, where he functioned in the Word of Knowledge (Acts 2:13; 1 Corinthians 14:6) and in Revelation and Teaching (Acts 2:14-32; 34-38) and in Prophecy (2:33; 39-40). Tongues are the first expression of the Holy Spirit and the evidence that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church (Acts 2:3-4). In this Epistle Paul indeed gives it the highest ranking for what could be more important than the individual speaking directly to God (1 Corinthians 14:2)? What could be more important than the manifestation of the fire of God (Acts 2:3)? Is there any greater activity than worshipping and giving thanks well unto God (1 Corinthians 14:17)? What could be more important in our meetings than to have a sign of the presence of God to the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 14:22). Its value is underscored by the fact that Paul said the he spoke in tongues more than them all (1 Corinthians 14:18). The issue that Paul brings to bare is simple that he wants the whole church to prophesy as well as to speak with tongues for through prophecy the whole church will be instructed in the word of the Lord and the lost will be saved (1 Corinthians 14:22-24). In conclusion Paul says that everyone should have a hymn, a revelation, a tongue and an interpretation so that the whole church can be edified. He underscores the necessity of tongues by commanding that no one forbids anyone else to speak with tongues. When he told the Thessalonians not to quench the Spirit we can be certain that tongues was at least in part what he was referring to if not the very focus of the

40 And let all things be done decently and in order<sup>67</sup>.

## Chapter 15

1 But brothers I make known to you the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received, in which you also stand.

2 Through which you are also being kept safe<sup>68</sup>, if you hold fast to the word, which I preached to you, lest you believed in vain.

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statement (1 Thessalonians 5:19). When the baptism of the Holy Spirit and Fire was poured out upon the church the fire of God was manifested as tongues of fire (Acts 2:3). The tongues of fire filled the tongues of every person present and they spoke with these tongues of fire. Paul uses a word specific to putting out fire, 'quench' (sbennumi). Thus Paul warns that the fire of God can be diminished or even put out if the Holy Spirit is resisted. In fact, even if you consider someone wrong and out of order to forbid them to speak with tongues is as if you threw cold water on the fire of God, "To quench the Spirit was to suppress or restrain the Spirit from manifesting itself in charismatic activities like speaking in tongues and uttering prophecy within the life of the community" (see F. Lang, TDNT VII, 168. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich; tr. Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Ten volumes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-76. Wanamaker, C. A. (1990). The Epistles to the Thessalonians: A commentary on the Greek text. Spine title: Commentary on 1 & 2 Thessalonians.; Includes indexes. (202).)

<sup>67</sup> The Church is the place where we assemble ourselves to hear God speak. The only way that we are going to hear God speak in our assemblies is if those who are gather know how to yield to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The church is not a place for everyone to share their ideas and opinions, it is a sacred place where an ever increase manifestation of the power and glory of God should be revealed. Anything that disrupts the sacred activity of the Holy Spirit or creates confusion is out of order. If an individual is not speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit then what they are saying should have little to no place in the context of the church.

<sup>68</sup> The context demands a rendering of either 'safe' or 'whole'. Although the Greek word 'sotzo' is the common word for 'saved' there are several places in the New Testament where the context calls for different aspects of this word to be brought out. For example, the meaning of sotzo is properly rendered 'made whole' with respect to physical health in Matthew 9:21,22; Mark 5:23,28,34; 6:56; 10:52; Luke 8:48,50; 17:19; Acts 4:9; 14:9 also the meaning of 'keep safe' may be observed in 2 Timothy 4:18 and John 12:27. In fact, 'sotzo' may refer to either spiritual, physical or financial rescue from God. The context of 1 Corinthians 15:2 is more suited to the good health and well being of a person rather than the salvation of the soul. Some even attempt to make the salvation of the soul a work in process instead of the miracle transformation, which it is (John 3:5-6; Colossians 1:14; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:9). This phrase is also rendered "by which you also are being kept safe" by Green's Literal Translation. The fact is, that the word of God reveals to us that we have been saved from the former way of life. We have been made new creatures old things have past away and all things have been made new (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15). When we define salvations as the act whereby we were redeemed then the testimony of the New Testament gives us the assurance that we are redeemed and that we belong wholly to God. Without looking beyond the letters that Paul wrote to the church of Corinth we find the absolute testimony of this salvation. The opening statements to the church of Corinth sets the tone for this in that Paul wrote to the sanctified ones who were called to be holy ones (1 Corinthians 1:2). There are numerous verses of scriptures in this first letter to the Corinthians that testify to the fact that Paul believed and taught that salvations was an event that had already taken place for those who believed (1 Corinthians 1:8-9,18,21; 2:12,16; 3:9,16,23; 4:17, 19-20; 6:1-2,10,15,17,19-20; 7:23; 10:17; 12:13,27; 15:17). When we consider Paul's writings as a whole then the present reality of salvations is witnessed hundreds of times. We are presently being kept safe by the power of God (1 Peter 1:5; John 10:28; 17:11,15). But it is essential that we stand in the power and authority that He has in trusted us with. If we do not hold fast to the word of the gospel then we will find ourselves without the blessings and promises of God.

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am and His grace unto me has not been in vain rather I worked harder than all of them though it was not I but the grace<sup>69</sup> of God that was with me.

24- Then the end when He hands over the kingdom to God and the Father when every ruler and every authority and power is put down<sup>70</sup>.

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<sup>69</sup> Grace is the active power of God at work in us. One may begin to catch a glimpse of this truth as Paul points to grace as the source responsible for all that he was and was able to accomplish (1 Corinthians 15:10; Galatians 2:9; Ephesians 3:7). God's grace is an operative power not a passive one. It was operative to change Paul into a new creation in Christ Jesus; it was operative to work through him producing all of the signs, wonders and demonstrations of the Spirit to preach the gospel. It would continue to be operative to eventually raise him from the dead at the time of the first resurrection when the dead in Christ shall arise first (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). Paul told Titus about the active work of Grace in such a way that almost personifies grace making it identical in its work to that of the Holy Spirit. He said that it was the grace of God that had appeared to everyman teaching to live soberly, righteously and godly (Titus 2:11-12). Grace is the divine ability to live in the ways of God and walk in the Spirit.

This supernatural power of grace transforms our lives in an instant making us a new creation through Jesus Christ our Lord (John 1:17). It can only happen this way because the grace and truth came by Jesus (John 1:14). It is through this grace that comes only by Jesus Christ that we have an unlimited access to the majesty and glory of God, which enables us to receive all of His fullness (John 1:16).

The functional and miraculous power of grace may also be demonstrated external to the saints of God. One example would be Stephen who was full of grace and power and as a result he did great wonders and signs among the people (Acts 6:8). Paul testified that each man was able to function in various manifestations of supernatural power based upon the measure of grace that they had received (Romans 12:6; Ephesians 4:7). Also we come to recognize that it was because of the great grace that was poured out upon the church that produced a demonstration of great power (Acts 4:33). As grace abounds in our life its effect will be to produce everything that we need both spiritually and materially (2 Corinthians 9:8; 1 Timothy 1:14).

<sup>70</sup> It is essential that we recognize that we are engaged in a great conflict against the powers of darkness (Ephesians 6:11-12; 1 Peter 5:8; James 4:7; Acts 26:18; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Titus 2:12). Through Christ Jesus, who alone has defeated all the powers of darkness, we are promised both authority and victory over every one of their works. We have been given the strength of the Lord and the power of His might to engage these diabolical forces that would once again overthrow us, even as they did Adam. We have been given the very power of God and the authority of Christ to destroy their works, if we are willing to walk in the authority that is in Christ Jesus. Jesus, who has been exalted to the highest place of authority, will reign in His supreme position until every ruler, authority, and power has no more place to function in God's world (Acts 2:33; Hebrews 1:13). Jesus by Himself disarmed every ruler and authority, and destroyed Satan's stronghold over man (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14-15). Through Christ Jesus, God delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Dear Son; where Jesus Himself reigns, every power and authority being subject to Him (Colossians 1:13; 1 Peter 3:22; Ephesians 1:21). Jesus, as a man, overthrew every power and authority of Satan that Adam had become subject to; inasmuch that Jesus said, "Now is the prince of this world judged, now is the prince of this world cast out" (John 12:31; John 16:11).

As the sons of God, we are commissioned by God to walk in absolute authority over all of these powers of darkness. The prince and the power of the air - the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience - is made subject to every demand of Jesus and His saints (Matthew 28:18; Luke 10:19; Ephesians 1:21; 1 Peter 3:22). Although Satan still has the power to oppose mankind and to fight against the saints, Christ Jesus has ensured our conquest against all of their forces (Ephesians 6:10-12; 2 Corinthians 10:4; Luke 10:19; 1 John 2:14; 1 John 4:4; 1 John 5:18). We are commissioned by God to tear down and overthrow their works, wherever we encounter them (John 14:12; 1 John 3:8; 1 John 5:4-5; Revelation 2:7,11; Revelation 2:17,26; Revelation 3:5,12; Revelation 3:21; Revelation 21:7).

Everything that we are engaged in today is moving to one final conclusion: the ultimate removal and destruction of every ruler, authority, and power that is opposed to God. Soon, Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit for 1000 years, and Christ Jesus and His saints will rule with a rod of iron (Revelation 20:1-3; Revelation 2:27; Revelation 19:15). At the end of the 1000 years, Satan will be released for a season; and

25- For He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet<sup>71</sup>.

46- Now the spiritual was not first but the natural then afterwards the spiritual<sup>72</sup>.

## Chapter 16

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every rebel and every ruler, authority, and power opposed to God will be destroyed in one final judgment (Revelation 20:7-11; 2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 21:1-5; 2 Peter 3:13; Isaiah 65:17).

<sup>71</sup> Christ Jesus reigns today! He began His reign to put down all his enemies 2000 years ago, when He was exalted to the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:33; Acts 5:31; Acts 7:55-56; Hebrews 1:13; Hebrews 10:13; Ephesians 1:20; Philippians 2:9; Psalm 110:1; Matthew 22:44; 1 Peter 1:21). After having defeated the powers of darkness, He was given the place of sovereign authority: to rule until everything opposed to the Kingdom of God is brought to an end (Revelation 1:18; Colossians 2:15).

The rulership of Jesus Christ has begun among those who have willingly received His rulership, and have embraced the transformation that has been brought to us through His name. To those who have come under His dominion, He has also given power through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and Fire: to exercise authority over all of the enemies of God. We must be willing to recognize that Jesus reigns for the purpose of destroying every power of sin and death. Should we make the mistake of believing that somehow God is at peace with sin and death - and is not militant against it - then we would believe a lie, and be damned! He is reigning now in our lives, and where He reigns sin and death have no power; but are destroyed wherever they raise their rebellious and treasonous head (1 John 3:8; John 12:31; John 16:11; Luke 10:19; Mark 16:17; Romans 6:12,14).

In the future Jesus will come and reign for 1000 years over all mankind, whether they willingly accept Him or not. He will rule with a rod of iron, and he will crush all rebellion and opposition (Psalm 2:9; Revelation 2:27; Revelation 19:15; Revelation 20:3-7; Zechariah 14:16-19). At the end of that age, Satan and every power of sin and death - and all those who joined league with them - will be cast into the lake of fire; and the age of sin and death will be eternally over. God has given us the power to live in the glory of His nature and will. He has made us His temple and dwelling place. Will you continue to listen to the deceptions and propaganda of the Satanic lie that gives power to sin and disobedience? Or will you instead rise up together in His righteous cause, and say: "Christ Jesus reigns supremely, and His will shall be done!"

<sup>72</sup> One of the important features of this verse is that it provides insight into the contrast and definition of the spiritual and the natural (1 Corinthians 2:14). These two words: spiritual (pneumatikos) and natural (psychikos), are used by Paul to describe the transition that must take place in our thinking and conduct since we have been born of God. This verse describes the contrast between what is earthly and heavenly. It is important that we recognize it is not a contrast between what is demonic or sinful and heavenly. Christ Jesus who is the life giving spirit because he was not created but incarnated into flesh gives us the life of the Spirit through the miracle of faith. Whereas in Adam we have been confined to an earthly existence and subject to every natural law.

The new birth is a spiritual birth that comes through Jesus the life giving spirit by the Holy Ghost and results in that which is heavenly. We are a new creation not shaped from earthly materials nor conceived through natural means (John 1:15-16; 3:6). We should no longer think and act like mere men shaped and fashioned after Adam but rather as heirs of God created in Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 3:5; Ephesians 2:10; Galatians 6:15; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Through the resurrection life that is in Christ Jesus we can now bear the image of the heavenly in our conduct and behavior just as we will one day outwardly when we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).

Although we have not received the spiritual body we have received the spiritual or heavenly life. The natural body is completely compatible with the spiritual and heavenly life modeled for us by Jesus who condemned sin in the flesh (Romans 8:2; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 John 4:3; John 1:14). We are not of this world we are of heaven even though our tabernacle is an earthly body of clay (John 15:19; 17:14,16; 2 Corinthians 4:7). Adam does not represent the ideal human being that is only found in the person Christ Jesus. Each one of us began our life in a purely natural existence but are now changed into the same image of Christ Jesus and are commanded to be conformed to that image (Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18). Through the new birth we live a spiritual life in the nature like of the man from heaven (Galatians 2:20; Romans 6:4; John 17:21-23; 2 Corinthians 13:5).

13- Keep alert stand firm in the faith be courageous be strong<sup>73</sup>.

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<sup>73</sup> Moses told Joshua that he would have to be strong and courageous if he was going to accomplish the things that the Lord had given Him to do. He could not be afraid, or allow fear to influence him in any way (Deuteronomy 31:6-7; Deuteronomy 31:23). Joshua, in turn, also told all of the people of Israel that they would have to be strong and courageous if they were going to inherit the things that God had promised them (Joshua 1:6-9). Paul commanded the church at Ephesus to be strong in the strength of the Lord and the power of His might, because of all of the opposing powers of darkness that would attempt to hold them back from the promises and blessings of God (Ephesians 6:10).

We must realize that we have to stand up against harassing and tormenting evil spirits - that would attempt to stop the blessings of God and would intimidate us into believing things contrary to the word of God. If we are willing to believe and obey the word of God, then we will see the promises of God revealed. We are always at a crossroad: making a decision if we are going to believe God, or believe the lies that the powers of darkness world convince us of. The powers of darkness foretell our failure and demise; every condemnation and accusation and hopeless despair comes from the prince and power of the air. The God of this world would inflict such defeat on the people of God; and the only remedy is to be courageous and strong! Believe what God has said, and stand fast in the authority of your faith. Do not turn to the right or the left, but persistently move forward in the promises of God with an unwavering confidence and assurance. Every lie that Satan tells, every slander that he makes, every stormy sea of life, and every mountain of hindrance - command them to leave and be gone in Jesus' Name.