

Dr. Gary Meadors, 1 Corinthians, Lecture 29, 1 Corinthians 12-14, Paul's Response to the Question Concerning Spiritual Gifts, 1 Corinthians 12

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This is Dr. Gary Meadors in his teaching on the book of 1 Corinthians. This is lecture number 29, 1 Corinthians 12-14, Paul's Response to the Questions Concerning Spiritual Gifts. 1 Corinthians 12.

Well, welcome back as we continue in our lectures in chapters 12 to 14 of 1 Corinthians. We're on page 183 in Notepad 14, and we're actually starting to look at the text. There's a lot in this text, and yet, at the same time, we can abbreviate some.

Our time in 1 Corinthians is getting pretty expanded, as you can tell. But at the same time, we'll give you enough so that you can get the feel for it, and then you'll have to do your own research. At the end of the day, learning means an activity, and if you don't do some activity to learn, such as reading commentaries, or thinking through, all you'll do is listen to me and soon forget what I said, even if I said it in a way that was useful for you.

So, it's important to do your own research in this domain. Page 183, we're talking about chapter 12 now, Spiritual Gifts in the Sovereign Lord. The function of the Spirit is to enable the believer to recognize Jesus as Lord, and that's how the chapter starts.

In fact, it's sort of a surprising start, but it's setting some context, and the context comes back at the end of the section in chapter 14. Now, about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans somehow or other, you were influenced and led astray to mute idols.

Therefore, I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says Jesus be cursed. Be cursed is the word anathema. Some versions will say anathema Jesus and no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

Now, there has to be some historical and cultural setting in which this makes sense. We know that we're dealing with a polytheistic culture, a culture that runs its life according to the gods, looks to the gods in various ways, and seeks their favor in various ways, even in a pluralistic way. We know that pagans spoke in tongues.

We'll mention some of this later. So, there was that in their life before they came into the church. Maybe that has something to do with why the Corinthian church is the only one who's having some issues here.

I don't know. I don't think anybody really knows. We don't have that much information as to exactly how all this relates, but we have enough information to know that the pagan idolatrous situation in Roman Corinth was massive.

Now, the section marker and subject signal are concerning in verse 1. It's not self-evident to what tone pneumaticon, those who are spiritual, refers. Is it a reference to people who are spiritual, as some hold, or is it a reference to the gifts, as some others hold? They suggest that this terminology is used for gifts in order to place gifts in the perspective of endowments given by the spirit, that is, the things of the spirit. So, when he says, I want you to be informed, you know that when you were pagans, therefore, anyway, sorry, I shouldn't have looked over there.

Notice the bottom of page 183. It is not self-evident to what this refers. Is it a reference to people, or is it a reference to the gifts? Consider the force of, I do not desire you to be ignorant, in 12.1, with its counterpart in 14.38. If anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant.

That's an interesting passage, but when you think of the boundary markers for chapters 12-14, it makes good sense to see that Paul started and Paul ended in a similar fashion. The fact that these are the terminal texts makes this juxtaposition of ignorance even more pronounced. Paul's rehearsal of the Corinthians' previous life is, you know.

We've been confronted with this *oude*, which is the idea of, you know, but we were confronted in a negative clause. Don't you know this? Don't you know this? Don't you know this? Instead of putting it in a negative this time, Paul says, you know. He gives them some credit in terms of the conversation, and they should be able to respond to that.

So, it's a rhetorical form of reminder. You know, and immediately the audience starts to think, well, what is it that we know? Yeah, I know this, I know this, I know this. So, it's part of the rhetoric of an oral culture where these are being read and presented.

Paul's reference to idols is not immediately apparent to the 20th-century reader. It seems probable, however, that Paul was reminding the readers that inspired utterances were also the phenomena of paganism. And that the real test of glossolalia was submission to the lordship of Christ.

A submission that would also produce obedience to apostolic teaching. And so, this becomes the issue here. Who's lord? The former gods, Christ, and how does Paul relate to all this as one of the lord's emissaries? F.F. Bruce reminds us, quote that in classical literature, Apollo was particularly renowned as the source of ecstatic utterance.

As on the lips of Cassandra of Troy, the priestess of Delphi. Or the Sybil of Kume, whose frenzy as she prophesied under the gods' control is vividly described by Virgil. So, it was present in the culture that preceded the writing of Paul.

At a humbler level, the fortune-telling slave girl of Acts 16 and 16 was dominated by some kind of a pythonic spirit that caused her to speak. And the man who controlled her probably made money interpreting that speech to people. So, we see here that we're not going into a situation where tongues were not already known to the culture.

It was known to the culture, but now we're under another umbrella. There's an interesting analogy here about how all this comes together. So, you were led, Barrett observes, it suggests moments of ecstasy experienced in heathen religion.

When a human being is, or believed to be, possessed by a supernatural. For example, in Lucian's *Dialogi Moratorium*, Paris speaks of the power of love and says a sort of God. Now the ancient Greeks used the word demon for the word God.

There's no correlation between New Testament demons and that, but that just happened to be the vocabulary that they used. You'll see that from time to time. Before, a sort of God carries us away wherever he wills, and it is impossible to resist him.

That's that ecstatic, out-of-control sort of utterance. It was a common phenomenon in the ancient religions of the time of the Roman court. These people probably observed this in pagan temples.

They were certainly familiar with the fact that communications with the gods often resulted in the person who communicated with them being in a trance and giving ecstatic utterances of some kind or another. Sometimes a trance wasn't even needed. So, Paul's authoritative instruction about true spirituality now comes in verse 3. There are about 27 curse tablets that have been found in Corinth's archaeological work.

These curse tablets have inscriptions on them of a variety of kinds where the Roman Corinthians would try to curse someone else. Maybe a business person or someone they're in conflict with. Maybe it is related to the courts.

But we have all kinds of evidence that it was a common thing in Roman Corinth for them to try to curse their enemies and people they were in conflict with. This polytheistic culture used curse formulas to influence a variety of things. It could relate to sports, love, politics, rivalries, and commerce.

Winter argues that the evidence of the uses of curses in Roman Corinth may have been carried into some Christian practice as well. The gods held powerful sway over the populace, and the populace saw their gods as a way to manipulate their world. Well, not too different from some Christians, is it? Asking God to do this or asking God to do that.

But this was a negative context we call curse. The question is, those who had become Christians had probably practiced this in the past. Did they carry it over into their situation when they became Christians? Which would not have been all that farfetched given the transition they had to make.

Anathema Jesus, Jesus. There are numerous proposals for reconstructing this, but due to some lack of information, there is no final compelling answer to Anathema Jesus. But there are a number of proposals.

First of all, it could be a hypothetical curse that Paul put in to balance the confession of lordship. Nobody can say curse of Jesus, and nobody can say Jesus is lord. To contrast the old life and the new life.

It is not very likely, but some say that. Furthermore, there is an implication here that some non-Christian ecstatics may have been cursing Jesus in their ecstatic state. This was a culture in conflict.

At least those who touched the Christian church were in conflict with it. And if they had taken and put curse tablets against other things, which is to say that they might not have used the same procedure to try to get the upper hand in relation to their conflict with the church? Or perhaps even something the Corinthian believers themselves did.

That is, call on Jesus to curse others. I mean, they did it with their other gods. Maybe they thought they could do it with Jesus. I mean, the Psalms have imprecatory psalms where the psalmist cries out to God to take care of his enemies.

Well, is it unlikely that a Christian might not call out to their God to give them relief from their enemies? That's not only likely but sometimes appropriate. At the same time, however, it's not appropriate to use the same cultural aspect of the curse tablets. Furthermore, a slogan used as an accusation against Jesus and the Christians could be this anathema to Jesus.

Was that a slogan that people were using that needed to be addressed? And Paul said, those people are there, but you're on this side; Jesus is your Lord; therefore, you can say Jesus is Lord. But if you say curse at Jesus or Jesus curses you, then you are not part of the community. In 110 CE, a while after Corinth, the question is, could

it have happened during the time of the mid to late 50s? Pliny the Younger gave the order to revile Christ.

Well, was there something going on in terms of reviling Christ in the conflict in Corinth between Christianity and the Jews or Christianity and the pagans? That is extremely likely, but we have no proof to say that that's what this means. Furthermore, Winter's Reconstruction is the thesis of this book, that is the book that Winter wrote after Paul left Corinth, it has been argued that the inroads of paganism were seen in the way Christians reacted to others in an adversarial situation, whether in their Christian assembly or outside of it. So it's not all that farfetched to think that the Christians might have actually been not so much saying Jesus anathema, but they might have been syncretistically using curses to deal with some of their infighting even within the congregation.

Jesus is Lord; however, is the watershed about this. It's not a mere verbalization. It's not a formula just to be a formula.

It is a confessional truth in formula form. Jesus is Lord. Romans 10:9, a rather famous verse.

If we can confess Jesus as Lord, I better read it. I don't know why my memory slips me all of a sudden. Lack of practice, I reckon.

Romans 10:9, real quick here, thin pages. If you declare with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. Jesus is Lord.

Jesus as Lord is another one of the translations. But it is a confessional formula. Jesus is Lord.

And so, to curse Jesus is to deny that. And that's why Paul says you cannot. Anybody who curses Jesus has immediately revealed that their activities are none of the Spirit of God.

Because that's outside the parameters of what can be done and certainly what should be done, in conclusion to 12:1-3, many have wondered what 12:1-3 has to do with gifts. In chapters 12-14, it seems to be an odd introduction to the gifts.

Therefore, this portion is often passed over with haste. But 12:1-3 is programmatic for the context. The whole issue of the proper use of special spiritual gifts relates to Christ being your Lord.

Relates to the Lordship of Christ. If Christ isn't your Lord, you cannot love. Love is the law of a community.

Love is the law of spiritual formation according to Galatians 5. And so, this whole issue has to do with Jesus being Lord. He's the Sovereign Lord as I've said in the outline. And that you have the Sovereign Lord and you have the law of love.

In chapters 13 and 14. The whole issue of these gifts relates to the Lordship of Christ. Both in having the gifts, the sovereignty of God.

In exercising the gifts. 13 and 14 make it clear that it's submission to Jesus' Lordship, Jesus' teaching that guides our way. If you compare the terminal statements, we should read 14.37 and 38 while we're here.

It matches almost exactly what we read in 12:1-3. Whoops. I was over in Romans. Knew that wasn't right.

14:37 and 38. If anyone thinks they are a prophet or otherwise gifted by the Spirit, let them acknowledge that what I, Paul, am writing to you is the Lord's command. But if anyone ignores this, they themselves will be ignored.

The old translation is if anyone is ignorant, let them be ignorant. What's the point? The point is that refusal to accept the apostolic teaching marginalized you from the truth to the category of error. And Jesus is not your Lord in the category of error.

Jesus is Lord, and as I've said in another setting, the word, the truth is Lord. Because they are inseparable, now, continue to think about this.

In verses 4-31, the Sovereign Lord has ordained unity and diversity in the domain of spiritual gifts. After the introduction of 12:1-3, Talbert talks about chiasm. You're expecting that by now.

In the remaining section, 12:4-13, spiritual gifts. The answer to that is the repetition of the spiritual gift issue in chapter 14. In the middle is proper motivation in manifesting the gifts.

That is, love is the manager of the community. It's not a bad idea to see that. Talbert also proposes an ABA pattern for 12.4-30, which is another chiasm I'm not going to list for you.

This outline doesn't follow the suggestion. Garland actually presents an entirely different chiasmic plan for the entirety of chapters 12-14. The 12:1-3 and the end of 14 would perhaps make one curious about that.

But we're not going to follow that lead. We're going to float through it in terms of the paragraphs. 1b, unity, and diversity are observed in the distribution of gifts.

So, now, after he's introduced the fact that he wants to talk about gifts, he begins, rather than criticizing them with the negatives, present the positives and the negatives sort of flow and take care of themselves. There is diversity of spiritual expressions, but unity in the terms of the origin of these expressions. In chapter 12 verses 4-6.

The nature of 12-14, students, is of such a nature that 12-14 is like a narrative. Sometimes the careful reading of this text yields its meaning faster. There are some key words, there are some key ideas, and there are some controversial interpretations.

But reading it is important, so I'm going to do that. Verses 4-6. There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them.

There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There's that theme, the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone, it is the same God at work.

Same, same, same. Paul treats the issue of diversity within unity by analogy with the Godhead. The theme of unity and diversity is intrinsic to the creation pattern.

Unity, diversity. The nature of the Godhead demands unity. While in a variety of ministries and manifestations characterize the persons of the Godhead, it is a diversity grounded in unity.

Note the pattern of the repetitions here. I've given the Greek for you who may know it, so you can see how starkly you have the attributive form of autos, which means the same. That's the only way we can say the same.

You have different kinds of varieties, but the same. pneuma, Spirit. The difference, but the same Lord.

Difference, but the same God. So, you've got the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. The Trinity is portrayed here in terms of the orchestration of gifts and the unity and diversity that is part of being in the body.

This same emphasis continues in chapter 12 and verses 7 through 11. You'll notice. Now, to each one, the manifestation of the Spirit, which we have talked about before, is given for the common good.

Notice these themes. Unity, diversity, common good. It all comes together.

And Paul labors it illustratively in narrative form. To one, there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom. To another, a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit.

To another, faith by the same Spirit. To another, gifts of healing by that one Spirit. To another, miraculous powers.

To another, prophecy. To another, distinguishing between Spirits, little s. To another, speaking in different kinds of tongues. And to still another, the interpretation of tongues.

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit: unity. And he distributes them to each one, diversity, as he determines. Now, this is a special list.

It's an interesting list that we're going to look at in a couple of ways. At the human plane, unity is not uniformity but the ability to live with diversity. Notice that on page 185.

Take that to heart. Unity is not uniformity. I think that a lot of times, in Christian leadership, we try to make people conform to what we want.

And we think if we get them to conform, we've got unity. No. If you don't have their mind and therefore their will, you will not have unity.

You'll just have forced labor. Unity is not conformity, but it is the appreciation of diversity. 186, top of the page.

The diversity of gifts is delineated, but unity is found in their purpose, the common good, and in their origin, the Spirit. The distribution, 12:7, and 11 provide an inclusion for this section. 12:7 introduces the Spirit's distribution to each one individually.

And 12:11, to each one, closes the section. So, it's got boundaries. The Spirit's goal is for the benefit, the common good, of the community and the body.

The Spirit manages the body to give it balance, to give it the diversity that it needs, and to meet all of its needs through the gifts of different individuals. By God's design, no one is omitted. Everybody is involved.

From the distribution through the extent, notice the word extent of gifting is by God's sovereign choice. While everybody is involved in the body, not everybody is equally gifted. Not everybody has the same gifts.

Some have a teacup. Some have a barrel. This is life.

Why? Because gifts, at the end of the day, are the end result of who we are as people. And for lots of reasons, people get to the point of becoming Christians and being in the church from a lifetime of development. And some developed well, and some didn't develop well.

And that's going to have something to do with the level of giftness when you get into church. God just doesn't automatically override that. Now, there are certain supernatural gifts that are not just functions that the sovereign God must distribute because they are not our choice in that regard.

Those stand out, and they stand out, particularly in this list that I'll be coming back to think about. Think of the non-miraculous spiritual gifts as the product of spiritual formation. Say that again.

Think of gifts that aren't miraculous. In other words, they don't require the intervention of God to achieve such healing. Think of gifts as the product of spiritual formation.

As we participate in the Christian life and in the community, we emerge, over time, with strengths and weaknesses every one of us. And the Spirit manages all of that in ways that we don't even know so that we emerge within the church for its good. If that is our goal at the end of the day, to be used of God for the good of the church.

Do you want to know what your giftedness is? Everybody does, don't they? Then get to work. And wait for others to inform you as they observe your patterns and success. Haven't you had people come up to you and say, you know, you're really good at this?

People respond to you. You're really a help to me or to someone else in a certain area. Start listening to that.

Start thinking about that. And start seeing that as perhaps patterns of your giftedness. The list, 12:8 to 10, that we just read.

The list is a unit. Fee notes, with some disdain, the variety of agendas that interpreters pursue by placing a certain interpretation upon the content and organization of this particular list. Much of his criticism is well-taken.

It is disappointing, however, that he does not note the apparent balance and organization of the list because that is what communicates in literary genre. How is it framed? How is it formed? Those questions need to be answered. Let's think about this.

On the issue of tongues being last in the list, that's sort of an informational note. I refer you to some bibliography. Is it given through the Spirit? Is that Greek there? The word how in capitals.

How does the Spirit give? We've talked a little bit about this. By energizing who you are, who you have become through your entire life, now under the umbrella of the Church. I think that is the standard fare.

There are other issues, such as the miraculous side of life. But in the normal function of the Church, most of these lists are dominated by tasks and functions that were needed to make the Church operate and to be effective in their world—the individual items in the list.

Is the list, and you saw the structure before; look at it at the top of page 187. You can see the structure. When you first look at it, you may say, oh, here's another chiasm.

No, it isn't because a chiasm requires that each of the pieces reflect the above. This has to be the same content.

This has to be the same content. They're not the same content. But there is a balance to it.

And there is a structure to it. And one of the ways we see the structure is that we have a set of four doublets. And we have one odd statement out, which is the miraculous powers.

But that becomes the hinge to this. This is, I think, a crafted list. I think it's a balanced list.

That is sending some messages here. If you accept that, then the miraculous powers in the middle are a major piece of definition for all the other items on the list. We're going to think about this a little more in a moment.

What and how does this list communicate to us? I've talked about the symmetry. I've talked about the balance. I've talked about the center.

What's common to this? Well, I think what is common to this list is that it is something that God has to do. Not something that is a result of my individual giftedness. I couldn't heal because I might be gifted in giving aspirins.

And why would faith even be in the list? We're all required to have faith. But faith is in this list. Why does it seem to be linked to healings? Well, let's think through the list.

Possible definitions. The challenge with terms in a list is that lists lack context. You have to, and consequently, you're forced either to go outside that list and find other usages or look for the logic within the context that you have.

And yet, at the same time, we don't always have as much as we want. We haven't had anything in Corinthians, for example, that talks about healing. Or the discerning of spirits, for that matter.

So, it's a challenge in this. Anyone or any source that confidently defines the items in a gift list probably disqualifies themselves from validity. If you read the commentaries on this list, and they describe to you what they think these words mean, you're going to find some variety.

Because we do not have enough data outside of the lists themselves to be able to nail all of this, we have some, and it's helpful. We can learn from broad reading and from good sources.

And yet, at the same time, it certainly isn't finalized. If we accept the possible structure for this list that I've proposed, that it's balanced, and that miraculous powers are the hinge, then all the items in the list are part of the miraculous powers. Miraculous powers give definition to the whole list.

So, I'm working on the assumption that this list is about supernatural expressions. And about miraculous powers. This isn't something that I could develop by growing and learning and doing, and then coming into the church and doing.

This is something that God has to miraculously provide. So, if we accept that, then all items in the list are part of the supernatural gifts rather than the working out of natural endowments. And this is for ministry in the church.

This is due to the hinge of the miraculous powers and the nature of the items in the list. And if you read better commentaries on these lists, you'll see some of that in terms of how they define it even though I have not found anyone that sees it exactly like I see it, in terms of the structure.

They hint at it, but perhaps they just didn't write it out into a chart. Once you put it in a chart, it hits you like a ton of bricks—for example, the first doublet.

Word of wisdom, word of knowledge. Those obviously have something in common. They both have logos, for example.

I'm not going to go to a great extent trying to define these words because the literature has plenty of suggestions for you. But I would suggest that if you follow the structure and design of the list, then you're going to say that a word of wisdom, a

word of knowledge, is not holy hunches but that it's God's supernatural activity of the dispensing of information. In the first doublet, word or message dominates.

In defining these, we must at least emphasize the message, which proceeds from wisdom and knowledge. It seems persons so gifted would convey God's message to the congregations in a way that's accurate, not as final inspiration, but inspired in a softer sense. It's instructive discourse.

But where did they get the wisdom? Where did they get the knowledge? One could say, well, they got it from reading Paul carefully, yes. But there's something special about this, I think, beyond just educating themselves. God's hand is in it in a special way.

Faith and healing, I think, are a doublet. Well, here's some interesting pieces. First of all, these words are reasonably self-evident.

But if they are in this list, and they are a doublet, then we have to ask, how do they relate to each other? What's the correlation of faith and healing as a manifestation of the Spirit? And why would faith even be here? We're all supposed to have faith. So, it has to be something special. Here, faith is not simply bland belief, but it is special because it's in the list.

And it's especially special because of the hinge. Is it faith to perform an extraordinary work or faith on the basis of actually having special knowledge of God's will, which would require direct, revelatory knowledge? If the latter is the case, then one has to wonder, and when I first studied this and correlated it with James 5, it hit me like a ton of bricks. One of the problems in the exegesis of James 5 is that when the elders come together and pray that someone is healed, they don't say if it's God's will.

They give no doubt whatsoever in James 5. They pray the person is healed. Every Christian community I've ever been involved in that tries to practice James 5 always conditions that practice. They condition it by if it's the Lord's will and in all kinds of ways.

And I have to wonder, in light of the fact that James 5 never gives you any conditions, it speaks absolutely. Those elders had to have a gift in terms of the pursuit of what they were doing at that early stage of the church as described in James 5. And James 5 is talking about healing. James 2 is already talking about faith. And so here we have this collation.

And James 5 even uses the phrase, if they pray the prayer of what? The prayer of faith. The person shall be healed. Well, correlation is not causation.

That's a general principle. So, I can't prove my point just by the correlation. But I want to suggest you think about it.

Look at it. And at the end of the day, accept it as at least one explanation of how we might make sense out of this list. There are just an awful lot of coincidences here.

And as I learned in the military, there are no coincidences. Everything has a reason. So, I'm wondering about this here.

The prayer of faith will raise the sick. And so here we have, I wouldn't call it faith healing as some traditions do. But we have the connection of faith and healing.

In my mind, in a miraculous way, doing it in that way calls for insight beyond just being a good Christian. Then, the miraculous powers are in the middle here. Well, yeah, the miraculous powers.

Workings of power, mighty deeds, miraculous signs. This is the hinge. It stands alone.

It's not linked with anything else. If the structure proposed is correct, then this signals that all items in the list are under the umbrella of supernatural expressions. And that's what I mentioned to you before.

This is not a chiasm, but it is a balanced structure. We easily see the doublets at the beginning and the end, which gives us influence for the internal part. Then, the odd thing is this miraculous power.

So, I'm taking that lead to see the list that way. Then it talks about prophecy and discerning of spirits. Throughout biblical history, prophets are those entrusted with revealed truth, with the task of conveying authoritative information to God's people.

But this has been challenged in the New Testament. Wayne Grudem and some theologians in the third wave. If you don't know what third wave means, look at the dictionary of Pentecostalism that is put out by Zondervan.

Peter Wagner also has an article on the third wave. And there's the first wave, which is Pentecostal. The second wave is charismatic.

And the third wave is in the Wimber movement, which was in California and was the creation of the Vineyard Church, which has grown and is present with us. The third wave, Grudem, redefined the role of New Testament prophets from the classical category of prophet. So, Grudem's mind does not consider the New Testament prophets to be equivalent to the Old Testament prophets.

Grudem's proposed view has not been adopted by either mainline systematic theology nor by works on biblical theology that I've noticed. I haven't seen anyone in academic publishing jump on his bandwagon. This debate is extensive.

But briefly, Grudem recognized the classic definition of Old Testament prophets as inherent spokesmen for God. In the Old Testament, they were the mouth of God. Moses was the mouth of God.

But in the New Testament, Grudem related the work of the classic prophets to the apostles and then created a new definition for New Testament prophets. Quote: The words prophet and prophecy were used by ordinary Christians who spoke not with absolute divine authority. Now, if you heard that and you were thinking Old Testament prophet, you'd say, wait a minute.

Old Testament prophets spoke with divine authority. They were the mouth of God. They spoke the word of God.

And you better listen. Absolutely. And you know they're not true prophets if what they say doesn't come to pass.

Notice the major massive redefinition that's going on here. But simply to report something that God had laid on their hearts or brought to their minds. That nomenclature I find tenuous.

There are many indications, Grudem says, in the New Testament that this ordinary gift of prophecy had authority less than that of the Bible and even less than that of recognized Bible teaching in the early church. So, these New Testament prophets have been downgraded to people who have emotional feelings and thoughts and spew them out to see where they go. Sorry for the sarcasm.

Consequently, Grudem created a new kind of prophet who was not ultimately authoritative and could err. This definition allows some church traditions to have prophetic activity since it now does not lay any claim to authoritative revelation in analogy to scripture. So, you can have people popping up claiming to be prophets, making statements, and see where they go.

Because prophets can err, they're just human, you know. Those really are.

This construct certainly serves certain theological paradigms. Grudem is an odd mix of Calvinism and Charismatic in his systematic theology, for example, in his own writings and associations in life.

He was, I'm not sure of his current setting, a major advocate for third-wave ideas while John Wimber was alive. Check the Vineyard Church website for literature from that period. He wrote as an advocate of third-wave ideas.

So, there's even more to the story of Grudem. Grudem did his dissertation on this question and then published it. He did it at Cambridge.

His mentor was a professor at Westminster Theological Seminary called Richard Gaffin. When Grudem communicated with Gaffin, whom he respected, what he was writing on, Gaffin was concerned and actually ended up writing a book ahead of Grudem and the publication of his dissertation so that there would be something to offset what Grudem was going to try to say. He called *Perspectives on Pentecost*.

I think it's in the bibliography. Richard Gaffin's *Perspectives on Pentecost* is a very important book if you're into the debate about these natural, supernatural aspects. In fact, Gaffin should be considered one of the main proponents of a cessationist view many times when cessationists are mentioned they're using out-of-date material like B.B. Warfield, who is completely off the charts in terms of what's going on in the modern world.

There are easy targets that are set up and knocked down. So, you've got to read widely and read deeply to get into this material. I'll talk more about this in my last lecture on 12 to 14.

On New Testament prophecy, look at Agabus. That's one of my favorite passages when I talk about the will of God. Agabus knew ahead of time God's sovereign will for Paul as he was on his way to Jerusalem.

He told Paul what was going to happen. Good sense would have said that, well, now that Paul's gotten a revelatory insight into what's going to happen, Paul should do something different so that he can continue to be useful in ministry. But Paul had already set an agenda, had his goals in mind, and he wasn't going to be swayed even by knowing the future.

Have you ever thought that if you knew the future, then you could make a good decision? Forget it. Read Agabus. Your knowing of the future is not the criteria for you to make a good decision.

You make good decisions for good reasons, not because you know the future. Get that one out of your head. And then Philip's daughters as well.

We'll talk a little more about some of this in chapter 14. The discerning of spirits is the next one. Well, a lot of people jump on this and try to say this has to do with figuring out whether somebody's got a demon or not.

I don't think so. It's linked, first of all, with prophecy. The discerning of spirits is a common theme in prophetic material, starting in Deuteronomy, which is to discern whether the prophet is speaking the truth or not.

Discerning spirits is best understood as relating to persons supernaturally gifted to validate the prophetic statements. Prophetic truth. Discernment of genuine versus counterfeit prophetic statements.

The phrase should not be applied to the issue of demonization. I don't think it has anything to do with that. Compare the post-apostolic document called the Didache.

One of the earliest documents we have about how the church functioned in the 2nd century. It'll give you some insight into the church's management of subjectivism in some of these domains. The last doublet is the kinds of tongues and interpretation of tongues.

The first two are clearly linked. The last two are clearly linked, which gives logic to the rest. Page 189.

This concluding pair is the opening pair of wisdom and knowledge influence, seeing this list as a series of doublets joined by the working of miracles. Hinge. Kinds of tongues.

Only here and in 1028 do we have the phrase. It goes in two directions. Some say it's ecstatic speech.

Some say that it is languages. You've got good scholars on both sides of that fence, and I've only given you a sample of them. There are many.

Tongues and Acts are mostly thought to be languages for evangelistic and authenticating purposes. But when you come into the book of 1 Corinthians there's some data that calls into question if it was real languages that a person who knew the language could interpret or translate. Or if it is another phenomenon of ecstatic speech.

1 Corinthians 14:22, however, is the real language because that's the illustration that Paul uses in relation to how tongues would relate to auditors who come into a Christian community and don't have a clue what's going on. We'll talk about that one and its location in a little while. So, while 1 Corinthians 12 is not self-evident and early 14:1-5 seems like glossolalia 14:22 raises the possibility of xenologia in keeping with Acts.

The detailed commentaries will unpack this for you, but notice those two words glossolalia is from glossa, which is the word for tongue, and then laleo is the word for speech in the noun form, so to speak in tongues or kinds of tongues. Xenologia is a word that has to do with actual languages. So, when you read the literature, you'll see those two terms, and you should know what they mean.

Here's a little bibliography related to that New Testament prophecy issue, which includes the book by Grudem and some others. I noticed I don't have the book by Gaff in here. However, you can find that in the bibliography that will come at the end of these notes or note pack 15. Alright, so we've been talking all this time about unity and diversity and distribution.

Now let's talk a little bit about unity and diversity and the functions of these gifts in chapter 12, verses 12 to 31 at the end of that chapter. The foundation of unity. Now Paul uses the metaphor of body.

Chapter 12, verses 12 and 13. Just as a body, though, one has many parts, but all its many parts form the body, so it is with Christ. So here we have a metaphor being set up.

For we were all baptized by one spirit, I would rather say in one spirit so as to form one body whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free, and we were all given to one spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. Alright, big metaphor.

A famous metaphor. The church is the body of Christ, and Paul works these metaphors in a number of places, not a lot but some. Let's start to think about these.

The metaphor of body is most likely derived from the Old Testament idea of corporate personality. That's technical terms. The Old Testament never bifurcated anything.

The Hebrew man didn't like the Greeks separate body and soul and all that. They were one. There's corporate personality there.

There's a number that hold that. Fitzmeyer is maybe one of them. There's also another option called the Greek or Roman Balipolitic which Fitzmeyer actually holds.

Best is another author on this material that Fitzmeyer cites. I didn't have the primary source there. And Thistleton hold the Balipolitic, which is a natural thing because it's the world in which they lived to use as a metaphor.

What was the Balipolitic of the Greco-Roman setting? It describes society of Paul's time. Paul could easily convert either of these motifs for his purposes. The Roman Balipolitic was the unity that they tried to achieve through the population.

That's part of seeking the welfare of the city, upon which Winter wrote a book and others wrote a book about their participation in the same project. They had their Balipolitic, not using all the nomenclature exactly in the same way, but that mindset, that imagery, that paradigm of being all united for the same purpose was part of their culture. So, we don't know exactly why Paul picked that up, but he's got plenty of ways in which he could have done it. If not, he could have done it just off the cuff as a good illustration.

Unity equals the body. Diversity equals the parts of the body. So here we begin the theme of unity and diversity.

Unity and diversity. The assertion that in one spirit, we were all baptized into one body needs a little clarification. It has a broad history in church traditions that some people call it the baptism of the spirit in certain Pentecostal-type denominations, and the first and second waves use this nomenclature to be baptized by the spirit quite a bit in other ways.

Let me say a few words. First of all, the bottom of 189 is the only mention of baptism by or in or through the spirit outside the Gospels and Acts, and in the Gospels and Acts, it's applied to Christ. He's the baptizer, not the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, page 190 the Holy Spirit is not the baptizer but is the instrument that Christ uses to effect the inauguration of the body. The preposition in is translated by in many translations but that can be misleading. By is an agency term.

The force of the preposition in isn't really clear, and it's debated whether it is to be understood as instrumental, which would be a boy, or whether it's local, which would be a sphere or in or through in a softer sense. Using in or through is a better choice than the word by. Christ is the baptizer, and the spirit is the one who enhances but causes this whole situation to function and manages the body from that standpoint.

Now, that's getting a little bit creative in the construct because we don't have the linguistic statements clear enough to say too much more. The significance of this metaphor, first of all, provides spiritual unity for the body. It is a metaphor.

It breaks down ethnic barriers. The church includes all without distinction. The body imagery eliminates the word all, eliminates using this statement to justify elitism or status for some special class of spiritual persons.

Those who have arrived or gotten it as my aunt said to me one time, have you got it? I visited her and told her I was going into ministry. She was in a certain denomination where you got baptized by the spirit until that happened, until you got it, then you weren't empowered adequately. So that was her first question to me.

Did I meet her theological criteria even though she didn't think theology? Furthermore, the use of baptize here is a rare figurative use breaking from the typical water ordinance. Baptism is always wet unless the context indicates otherwise.

Romans 6 is wet. It's been messed up by some American Christian traditions spirit baptism but it isn't there. It's wet.

And that's what you should assume about baptism unless the context indicates otherwise. This context does. Furthermore, Roman Corinth would have understood the principle of seek the welfare of the city or body in that body politic idea.

If that's what Paul was playing off of, which we don't totally know. The win of this phrase baptism in the spirit is best taken as Pentecost and viewed as a forensic statement. The church was inaugurated at Pentecost.

That's the baptism in the spirit and in fire that Jesus talked about. And it is a forensic legal starting point for the church. That's what the word forensic means.

It's the legal starting of the church. And it's not that every time somebody gets saved they have a new baptism. No.

You become part of that forensic start that the church had. It's a bit of a technicality that needs to be considered. It includes all those who eventually believe rather than inserting a continuous repetition of the baptism every time somebody comes into the church.

But we were baptized in the body at Pentecost. When we believe and identify with that, we are legally connected to that as a result of our belief. It's a forensic issue.

Here's some bibliography on spirit baptism. In fact, Hunter, Harold Hunter is a proponent of it out of the Church of God, I believe. And so, I'm giving you sources that look at it both pro and con.

Now, the rationale of diversity. We've got unity. We've got diversity.

The body gives us the unified. The parts give us the diversity. But let's think about it a little bit in verses 14 to 26.

Even so, the body is not made up of one part but of many. I'm wondering where the paragraph starts here. We're actually in the middle of a paragraph.

Now, if the foot should say, because I am not of the hand, and he goes through this litany of the foot and the other features of it. And, of course, Christ ends up being the head of the body.

God has placed the parts of the body in verse 19 or 18, every one of them just as he wanted them. Their sovereignty. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts but one body.

So, the diversity. It seems to me that this unit is marked by 12, 14, and 20. Many parts, one body.

And 14 says one body is made up of many parts. You see how it's a boundary there a little bit even though the paragraphs in most versions start with 15.

The emphasis on many draws all members into the circle rather than excluding anyone. Look at the litany of these many paragraphs that I've noted here for you. At the bottom of page 190.

Every believer is a necessary part of the body. And we use these illustrations all the time don't we? I mean, something as simple as tearing off a fingernail can mess you up for weeks. That little tiny thing right there.

Or break your big toe or your little toe and see what happens to you. I mean, what we think is just there and incidental can show up to be huge when something happens. So, every part of the body serves a purpose.

Every believer needs the help of other believers, just like every part of the body depends on the good function of another part. Nobody is a kingdom or a body to themselves.

Every believer is complemented. Not complemented with an I, but we complete each other by our unity. And by being in the community.

It's important that we be complementary with an E, not an I, to each other. We fulfill each other. We help each other.

Where I'm weak, you're strong. Where you're weak, I'm strong. And that's how the body is supposed to function.

Every believer is involved with others. 25 and 26. So that there should be no division in the body.

But that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. If one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

Now, Paul hasn't laid out why he's talking about the unity and diversity of the body. But obviously he's still dealing with divisions. The divisions that we started to look at in chapters 1 through 4. And those divisions existed in the exercises of the gifts.

The implication is that through the way he treats tongues, some thought tongues were the cat's meow. There's a metaphor for you. Some thought that tongues were the cat's meow.

And that if they spoke in tongues, they were just something special. And Paul denies that and says, no, that's not the case—the rationale of diversity.

So, on page 191, one cannot walk away from this and think that any part of the body is insignificant. Or that any part can go on its own. We need each other.

Man, that is hard to get our arms around, isn't it? It's such a simple truth that's so hard to live out. At the same time, no two are exactly alike. I suppose the greatest analogy to this is the family.

We talk about the church as the family of God, but I have never in my how many years have I been a Christian? I became a Christian in 1963 while I was in the Navy, the U.S. Navy. I was ordained in 1967. So, this year, in August, I will have completed 50 years of ordained ministry.

And 50 years of marriage, for that matter. And I shouldn't get off on rabbit trails here, and I'm not trying to remember what I was talking about. And so, no part of the body is extinguished.

I had a great thought for you, and I started using analogies, and now I have completely slipped my mind what I was going to say. I'm glad this is the first time in all these lectures that I did it exactly that way. I'm not always on my game, but that one really got me, so you can have a good laugh if you please. Because I can't hear you, just laugh out loud.

Okay? No two are exactly alike. Let's move on. Page 191, 1D.

Diversity is God's plan. Now, grasp this. Unity, diversity.

In nature, in human life, and in forensic policing, no two voices are exactly alike. No two fingerprints are exactly alike. Man! Diversity.

Even when you start thinking about nature and you think about humanity, it just shows up all over the place. Everything is different, and yet everything serves a function. Unity and diversity.

Diversity is God's plan. If we were all the same, what a boring world it would be. The logic is that diversity is part of God's creative plan in 14 to 17.

I'm not going to do a lot of reading here. This is where he goes through his narrative. The issues in the various translations as to whether the series of statements are questions or assertions is noteworthy, but it's really pretty incidental to the meaning.

The Greek text maintains question marks. You can read a number of these, and the versions will vary. Is it an assertion, or is it a question? Well, we're in rhetoric.

Questions would make good sense, and yet at the same time, as far as the end meaning is concerned, the meaning is still clear, whether it's assertions or questions. Just a little technicality to observe. Verses 18 to 20.

The inference is to be drawn. Diversity is God's decision—verse 18.

But in God, in fact, God has placed the parts in the body, everyone as he wanted. The focus of verse 18 is God's sovereign distribution. And that sovereign distribution in the way he's created us, it's sovereign distribution in the way that he alters us, it's sovereign distribution in terms of bringing us under that umbrella and causing us to function.

Each clause within that sentence makes a significant point that at the end of the day, it's God's work in God's way. Greek students should note that 12:11 and 18 reflect the synonymous nature of the two words for will. Boulami and Thelo.

Some try to distinguish these synonyms to make major theological points in certain texts. Their interchangeability, that is, these two words, interchangeability, here indicates that it is a context, not a linguistic morpheme, that provides the meaning. So, if you're in a situation where people have used Boulamai, for example, to prove something, don't go by Boulamai; go by the context.

That's almost always true with words. Words take their meaning according to their context, not according to their lexicography. Be very careful because a lot of word studies are very, very misinformed.

Alright. Unity and equality in the midst of diversity is God's plan in verses 21 to 26. Here again, this is such a narrative format that I'm not going to just elaborate on it.

The eye cannot say to the hand, I don't need you. It's a beautiful metaphorical picture of what's going on. Verse 24, While our presentable parts need no special treatment, God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lack it, so that there should be no division in the body.

There's that concept of division once again. Undercurrent, undercurrent, undercurrent in the book of 1 Corinthians and in that community was division.

Questions to ponder: How can one harness the unity and diversity of people in a ministry context? How can you make diversity a strength rather than a cause for division and problems? I've pastored, and maybe many of you are pastors or ministry professionals who deal with people. Or maybe you're just parents who have children. They're all the same aren't they, the kids? Hardly.

They're just as different as night and day sometimes. How do you make diversity a strength rather than a weakness? That's a major challenge in ministry. That's one of the challenges of our personalities to be able to pull that off.

But the fact is, the first thing we have to do is recognize that diversity is God's will. And if you've got this person and this person, and they're different night and day, and you gravitate to one over the other, you've got to be very careful here. You need to deal with and minister to them equally.

Consequently, we have some challenges in terms of each of us being able to live with diversity. We all like people who think like we do. We all like people who act like we do.

We like to have the compatibility. But no congregation has compatibility. No family has absolute compatibility.

There's diversity. So, you've got to find a way to make diversity a strength and not a weakness. It's God's will that you do that.

Someone has said that leading people is like herding cats. Okay, if you didn't get that, get this one. Leading people is like herding warm jello in a pan.

Now, there's a good one. It does not take long in ministry to understand this imagery. Leadership for ministry is not to be modeled after corporations.

We have sinned that way in big ways in the modern world. As one author put it, leadership is the way of shared praxis. Praxis is another term for practice.

That is, leaders enable followers to own a vision, not just conform to it. There's a very important book along these lines by Thomas Groom called *Sharing Faith, A*

Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry, The Way of Shared Practice. You'd be well advised to study that book.

It's not a simple book. It's not some little useless Christian bookstore pablum. It's a rather challenging book.

It's an educational book. If you look at the table of contents, you can see how very important it could be in ministry. It walks you through taking a group and taking a leadership idea and working the group through certain segments, about seven of them, so that when you get to the end of it, they don't just know what you said, they understand what you said, and now they're making a choice whether they want to own what you said and get on board.

It is a very, very important volume for those who are in ministry. Groom lays out how to process ideas so that a group, rather than just an individual, owns the ideas. If you're preaching at people, telling them what to do without bringing them to the place where they want to do it.

Sort of that analogy again. You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make them drink. You've got to learn how to make them thirsty so that they will want to take a drink themselves.

It's a drink of the pool of unity and diversity. Power is in group ownership, not just the so-called leader. Where a body, a mere perusal of Groom's Table of Contents can show you how valuable that book can be for you.

Furthermore, verses 27 to 31, the conclusion about being a body. We'll conclude chapter 12 in the next few moments—the concluding assertion of a metaphor in 12:27.

Take a look at that. Now, you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. God has placed in the church, and then he gives another list.

Okay. So, the body is focused, and then he follows that up with a variation of the list he gave the first time without the same kind of structure to talk about unity and diversity. The concluding list ranks the communication and leadership gifts first, leaving the showy gifts so prized by some at the very end of the list in 28 to 31.

This list has been called an exegetical and lexicographical minefield. One major issue is whether the ranking nomenclature indicates real rank or whether it is just a literary way to make the list. What do we mean by that? Well, look at it.

First, apostles. Second, prophets. Third, teachers.

Then, you get the rest of the list. Some pretty important things. Miracles, yeah.

Gifts of healing. Why did he enumerate? That's the only list that ever happens in. What's going on with this? And there's a lot of ink that has been spilled in terms of trying to come up with a construct that one feels comfortable with in terms of the assertion.

While making it clear that apostles, prophets, and teachers are to be preferred to the cherished gift of tongues on the part of some, the list also includes what some might classify as the blandest of all gifts in the list. Helps! You've got people who are gifted, all to the point of revelatory material at the beginning, and then you've got the janitor under the category of helps. That should make the point that everybody in the body is important.

Everybody serves a purpose. Own your purpose. Own it with gusto.

Own it with integrity. And do it the best that anybody has ever done it before, whatever that gift might be. In fact, this item is so off the radar screen that we have no idea how it was special enough to be called a gift.

There are all kinds of proposals. This may help us understand that the term gift is often merely a description of a function in the body. Every small church pastor knows that a volunteer janitor is a gift from God.

This list begins like Ephesians 4 with a focus on gifted people. The NIV interpretively translates so as to keep this emphasis throughout. Compare your versions on this one.

The ranking by assertion is usually an unusual list. Does the ranking imply order of importance? Or the order of authority? Or the order of New Testament historical precedence in founding and building the church? There are different ways to see this and still keep apostles, prophets, and teachers unique as people on the list. But there's more than one way to think about it.

And even more than one way to think about the apostles. Is this an apostle on the level with the twelve? Paul wasn't one of the twelve, but he was on the level with the twelve. But there were other possibilities, perhaps Andronicus and Junius, who were not on the level of Paul or the level of the twelve but were still called apostles.

Well, that's a big discussion. And here's part of it. Fee wonders if this is not showing subordination to the apostolic group, which would be apostles, prophets, and teachers.

Frankly, it is just reality. In my mind, they're the leaders. The problem is that it is one thing to recognize who they were in the first century, but it is hard and controversial to recognize who they are in our current context.

Certainly, no one likes them, but still, there is some pecking order for anybody to function properly. There's got to be leadership in any group. There has to be those who call the shots and those who follow.

And it's up to those who call the shots to make followers understand, help them understand so that they're not following because they have to, but because they want to. That's the difference between effective leadership and corporate leadership. Certainly, no one likes them, but still, there is some pecking order for anybody to properly function.

The first three in this list appear to be office holders, while the remaining are ministry functions. So, you see, this list raises a lot of questions. You can trace those questions, but the general outline of the list is relatively clear.

So, we've got an apostle. And that can be studied and studied and studied. Going back to Lightfoot in England, who wrote a major essay on the apostles.

Thistleton covers it in several sections within his own work. All the major commentaries have excurses on the concept of the apostles. As special, like the twelve and Paul, or as a gift, rather than as an office, in other ways.

Apostle was a term that covers the twelve apostles, Matthew and the book of Revelation, the imagery of the twelve stones, the twelve gates, and so forth. Paul, Adronicus, and Junius in Romans 16:7 are referred to as apostles. The question is if this term should always be viewed as special as the twelve and Paul, or if, in a gift list, it could be used as a ministry term, allowing for a broader use of the term as applied to others.

Fitzmeyer comments that in this text, the apostolic role is to be understood as a form of diakoneia, that is, ministry or service. He's Roman Catholic, so go there. Most do not accept an apostolic succession proposal, such as the Roman Catholics or even some charismatics.

See, apostles at the same level as Paul today. Having seen the risen Lord is one of the requirements of being an apostle at Paul's level. Check those texts out.

1 Corinthians 9:1 and the bibliography of a man named Jones. You'll get this in the last handout. Dunn concedes that apostles represent a wider circle than the twelve in Paul but believes that they still constitute a special group of founder members

who are personally commissioned on the basis of such passages as Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, and so forth.

Thistleton quoting Dunn. I don't have Dunn's volume available right here. The exact status of Andronicus and Junius is debated.

Most major commentaries restrict 1 Corinthians 12:28 to the twelve and Paul and that there are no successors after their time. So, the issue of apostles as broader than the twelve and Paul needs to be studied, but it might need to be studied outside this text and looked at in other texts. There are not a lot of statements about anything other than the twelve and Paul, but there are some, and those need to be accounted for as to whether we're talking about an office or we're just talking about a gift as an emissary.

New Testament prophets, like those in the Old Testament, received accurate information directly from God. They probably also served the purpose of accurately proclaiming truth and guiding the church when apostles were not present. Martin describes them as providing a revelation of the divine will for the congregation.

And I tend to think that New Testament prophets are an office special, very much like the Old Testament prophets, in consort with the apostles but not a replacement of one for the other in either direction. Teachers are listed here without the descriptor pastors. The teachers were probably non-revelatory persons gifted in transmission of and explaining the meaning and moral implications of the Christian faith.

I'm trying to conclude this. I need to get done here because our time is getting away from us. Teachers are listed here without the descriptor pastors.

But the noun helpers comes up in the next point. So, you got apostles, prophets, and teachers, and then you moved into others. And I'm not treating all the ones that are on this list, but this one is called helpers.

The NRSV says forms of assistance, which could be anything, only occur here in the New Testament. It's a term of activity meaning doing helpful deeds. It doesn't define what they could be, anything.

Thayer interprets it as a reference to deacons. The term has a modest use in the Septuagint even. Romans 12:8 in English sounds similar but not the same in the Greek.

But it is probably not a parallel because money seems in view in that particular context. So you can make connections in the English language, but be careful because you have to get to the underlying Greek word to make a legitimate

connection—the feminine noun for administration and the NRSV forms of leadership and the NIV forms of guidance.

Thistleton ability to formulate strategies. So, you see, everyone's trying to pull out meaning from these because we have no context, nor do we have any other occurrences that can help us. It's only used here in the New Testament.

Its extra-biblical usage is in the context of governing. The counterpart masculine noun is used for the person who steers the ship. It was clear to them to a great extent, and it probably was not monolithic in the sense of just one thing, but it was a category that could cover a wide variety of things under help and under administrations.

Both of these are absolutely essential for the unity and the good running of a group's body. Well, the last verses, 29 and 31, a lot more than what I'm going to say, are included here. They're much more significant than I can treat in our time.

But the language structure of the questions in 29 and 30 say, are all apostles, are all prophets, are all teachers? All those questions expect the answer no they aren't, no they aren't, no they aren't. Greek can set up questions with a negative and a negative way to make the answer be no, they're not.

So, it's not guesswork. It's actually grammar. It uses a rhetorical question, but the author pins the answer down in the process.

It is also important to make it clear that holding great gifts is not necessarily what makes one great. Paul uses an interesting transition statement but seeks the greater gifts, which he eventually shows are the gifts of education. And now I will show you the more excellent way.

The most excellent way. This statement transitions the theme of 1 Corinthians 12 into 1 Corinthians 13. How what he says about love is superior is addressed in 13.

And now, these three remain, but the greatest of these is love. Chapter 13 is an integral part of the movement from 12 to 14. It is not just an afterthought in Paul's mind or an emotional devotional or some great chapter on love.

It connects 12 and 14. It connects the problem of division and the need for diversity in a community that was less than unified as we move into the function of gifts in 14. 12.31 provides a transition to chapter 13.

Some translations close with 12, others open, close with 31a, and open with 31b. The fact is, in class, there were no chapter nor verse divisions in the original manuscripts

or any of the manuscripts that we have, by and large, that are early. We will create this later on.

Since it's such a close situation, transitional statements always tend to go in both directions. Consequently, it's paying your money, so take your pick, but be aware of the fact that it is a transitional verse, and we have a close connection between chapter 12 and chapter 13. Well, when we come back, we're going to talk about chapters 13 and 14, and we're going to have to do that in one lecture.

That's not going to be easy but we're going to achieve it. After that, I will have a lecture on gifts from the standpoint of the controversy about gifts rather than just the text here. We've looked at the text, and we'll look at the theological domain and how people are arguing about this. I'll try to give you some guidance on how you can research it and come to conclusions of your own.

After chapters 12 to 14, we're in 15 and 16, great material but not as lengthy in terms of the way I'm going to treat it. And so, consequently, we're getting very close to the end. If you've been here for all the lectures, my sympathies to you, my congratulations for hanging in there, and I most hope that it's useful.

I think the notes from the lecture can be very useful for you, and I'm appreciative and blessed by the fact that you cared to listen. So, you have a good day and we'll be back and finish up chapters 12 to 14 in the next lecture. Blessings on you.

This is Dr. Gary Meadors in his teaching on the book of 1 Corinthians. This is lecture number 29, 1 Corinthians 12-14, Paul's Response to the Questions Concerning Spiritual Gifts. 1 Corinthians 12.