

**Reading Together**  
**Year Long New Testament**  
**Bible Reading**  
**April 4 - 11**

**Monday, April 04 – 1 Corinthians 12: 1 – 30**

Beginning in chapter 12 and going through chapter 14, Paul speaks to the Corinthians about spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are gifts given by the Holy Spirit to assist in ministry and worship. Being able to sing well is a gift, but it is not a spiritual gift. Some examples of spiritual gifts are listed in verses 7 – 10. In the early church there were many powerful spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit used to help spread the gospel to the ends of the earth. These gifts are the gift of speaking tongues (like Peter and the other disciples could on the Day of Pentecost when people of all different languages could understand the gospel as it was being preached to them {Acts 2}), and the gift of healing. These were spectacular gifts that helped people to see the power of God at work, but Paul's point throughout these chapters is that, as spectacular as these gifts are, they are not as important as the Corinthian Church was making them out to be. People in the Corinthian Church had become puffed up that they had these gifts, and Paul wants to make sure that even if you have one of these gifts, it doesn't make you into a superstar Christian. Look at verse 11 where Paul makes the point that it is the Spirit that gives these gifts as he sees fit and for his purposes.

In verses 12 – 30 Paul compares the gifts given to members of the church with the different parts of the body. Each part of the body is important to the well being of the whole body, and in the same way each person and each gift is important to the well being of the church.

## **Tuesday, April 05 – 1 Corinthians 12: 31 – 13: 13**

As Paul continues his discourse on spiritual gifts he turns his attention to the spiritual gift that all Christians have. It is the most important gift (see 12:31). In these verses Paul tell us what true Biblical love looks like, but what we should really notice is what Paul says in 12: 1 – 3. You can have the gift of speaking in tongues, but it is meaningless without love. You can have the ability to proclaim the word of God clearly, but it means nothing without love. You can have faith that moves mountains, but without love that faith means nothing. You can give your money or even your life, but it means nothing without love. From there Paul goes on to describe what real love looks like.

Notice how Paul ends this passage. None of us are there yet, and the reason why is because we do not yet see everything clearly, and we won't until we get to heaven. We can learn how to love better, but we will never love perfectly as Christ has loved us. But in heaven we will see clearly what perfect love looks like and how we have been loved. Then we will know. Then we will love as we have been loved.

## **Wednesday, April 06 – 1 Corinthians 14: 1 – 25**

In chapter 14 Paul discusses the gifts of speaking in tongues and prophecy. First, the gift of speaking in tongues is meaningless without someone being able to interpret what you are saying. Without interpretation it is nothing more than gibberish. Second, look what Paul says in verse 22. The gift of tongues is for unbelievers so that they can see the power of God, and hear the word of God in a way that is intelligible to them. The gift of tongues was given by God to authenticate the work of the Holy Spirit as the Gospel was reaching new people groups. It wasn't just a show. Think back to where the gift of tongues first appears. It is on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), and it was so that people could hear the Gospel in

their own language. There was a purpose to it. But it became a mark of the Spirit's power that the Gospel was indeed being given to the Gentiles, as well as the Jews.

Now look what Paul says at the end of verse 22, the gift of prophecy (being able to speak for God to the people of God—like a preacher would do) is of value to believers and unbelievers, because as they hear the Word of God they are convicted of their sin (verse 24) and led to worship God (verse 25). In the end that is really what it is all about!

### **Thursday, April 07 – 1 Corinthians 14: 26 – 40**

The main thrust in these verses, as summed up in verse 40, is to have order in worship services. Paul has already addressed the role of men and women, and in these verses Paul gets more specific about the role women should have in the worship service. Many commentators believe that there was a specific problem in the Corinthian Church with disorder in the worship services, and some of that disorder was caused by too many people trying to talk at once. In particular, many commentators believe that women were interrupting the worship service by asking their husbands questions, and that is why Paul speaks so strongly about the subject in these verses. I do want to point out that Paul has other strong prohibitions against women leading and teaching men in other passages and he bases this once again on the fact that Adam was created first by God, and Eve was created to be Adam's helper.

### **Friday, April 08 – 1 Corinthians 15: 1 – 34**

This chapter is one of the greatest passages in the Bible. In these verses, Paul deals with the subject of Christ's resurrection and our resurrection. As Paul tells us in verse 2, this is the core truth that we need to hold onto. In verses 3 - 4 Paul tells us that this is the most important truth for us to

believe and understand. Paul establishes the truth of the resurrection by the testimony of many witnesses (verses 5-11). In verses 12 – 34 Paul goes on to make the argument that if Christ has been raised from the dead then we too will be raised from the dead.

### **Saturday, April 9 – 1 Corinthians 15: 35 – 58**

In these verses Paul deals with the bodies we will have as a result of the resurrection. The key point is that the bodies we have after the resurrection will be different from our earthly bodies, because they will be imperishable (they won't deteriorate). What will our resurrected bodies be like? I think the best indication of what our resurrected bodies will look like is Jesus' resurrected body. He is the first-fruits of what will follow. In verse 58, Paul closes the chapter with an encouragement to stand firm in our faith no matter what happens because we know a glorious resurrection awaits us one day.

### **Sunday, April 10 – 1 Corinthians 16: 1 – 24**

Paul was trying to raise an offering from the Gentile churches for the Christians in Jerusalem who were suffering as a result of a severe famine. In the first few verses of this chapter Paul encourages the Corinthians to set aside part of their income each week for the purpose of this gift. Notice Paul does not mention a tenth, it is to be a gift in keeping with their income. Also notice that it was the practice of the early church to meet on the first day of the week (Sunday), because that was the day Christ rose from the dead.