

**HOLY SPIRIT AND CHURCH IN FIRST CORINTHIANS:
THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CREATING UNITY
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO 1 COR. 12-14**

by

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SUMMARY

The main goal of this study is to demonstrate the role of the Holy Spirit in building up Church unity, based on the exegesis of 1 Corinthians. The current theme is urgent; however, little attention has been paid to it in research literature.

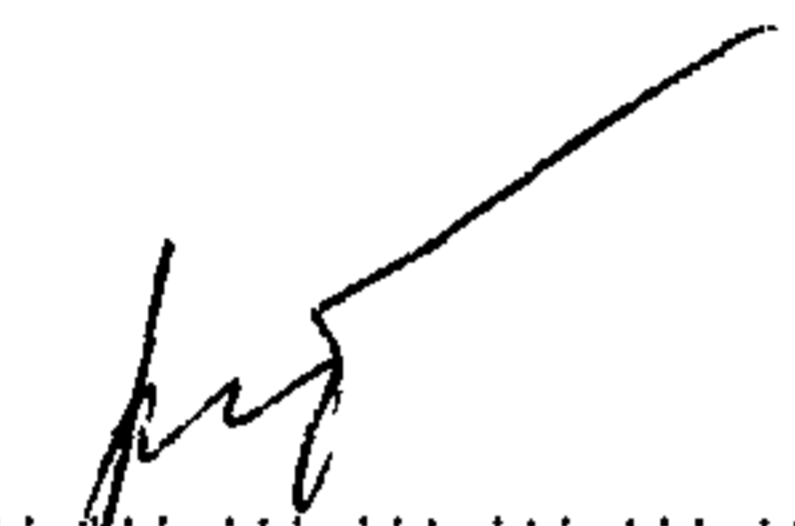
We have noted that it is not human wisdom but the Holy Spirit who is the key to our faith, salvation, and understanding of divine mysteries. The Holy Spirit along with Christ brings forward the building of the Church and guides it. One Spirit is the foundation for Church unity. The Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts according to His will and establishes their orderly operation. Seeking the guidance of the Spirit, trusting and obeying Him brings unity, whereas following different authorities, mistrusting and disobeying Him results in disunity.

Key Terms:

Spirit
Church
Unity
Body of Christ
Corinthians
Charismatic
Gift
Prophecy
Tongue
Baptism

I declare that

“Holy Spirit and Church in First Corinthians: The Role of the Holy Spirit in Creating Unity with Special Reference to 1 Cor. 12-14” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.


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(Dr. A. Shumilin)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Mt. – The Gospel According to Matthew

Mk. - The Gospel According to Mark

Lk. - The Gospel According to Luke

Jn. - The Gospel According to John

Act. – The Book of Acts

Rom. – The Epistles to the Romans

1 Cor. - The First Epistle to the Corinthians

1 Thess. - The First Epistle to the Thessalonians

Heb. - The Epistles to the Hebrews

ST- Synod Translation

BBT - Bishop Bezobrazov's translation

GNB – The Good News Bible

RSV – Revised Standard Version

NIV – New International Version

KJV – King James Version

FLSBNT – The Full Life Study Bible. New Testament

WBC – The Wycliffe Bible Commentary

JWC - John Wesley's Commentary on the Bible

IBNT – Interpreter's Bible. New Testament. Lopukhin's Successors Edition

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1. Introduction

Before going into the task it is necessary to give a short explanation of the biblical terms used in the title.

“Holy Spirit” means the third person of the Trinity, in union with God the Father and God the Son (Jesus Christ). A special focus in this work is on His activity in the church, bestowing spiritual gifts on the believers. “Unity” in this work concerns to the members of the church and tells about their solidarity, indivisibility and mutual understanding. To speak about the unity of the church means the absence of divisions within her.

1.1. Relevance of the topic

The Holy Spirit and the Church are significant topics in the New Testament. This is not surprising at all since the role of the third person of the Deity in the creation of the Church and the life of every individual believer is indisputable.

John, the Evangelist, speaks much about the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the One who gives new life (Jn. 3:3-6). He is the source of life (7:37-39). Chapters 14-16 describe Him as a Counselor (14:16-17), an Instructor (14:26; 16:13 and 20:22-23), and an Evangelist (15:26-27; 16:8-10).

The Book of Acts pictures the Holy Spirit as the One who leads to salvation (1:5; 2:38), endues for ministry (1:8; 4:31, etc.), guides the lives of believers (8:29; 10:19; 13:2; 16:7; etc.) and encourages them (9:31).

Paul gives a manifold presentation of the Holy Spirit as a person and describes the Spirit's creative role in the making of the Church. In Rom. 8:15-16, He is described as a necessary mediator between the children of God and their Heavenly Father, the One who produces assurance of salvation. Later on, He is made known as an Intercessor compensating for our deficiency (8:27). In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, the Holy Spirit instructs believers (2 Cor. 1:17-22), sets them free from the slavery of sin (3:16-18), and is ready to dwell among the people of God ceaselessly (13:13). The apostle also speaks about the Holy Spirit in his other epistles.

This topic is being discussed in-depth in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. The author touches on such significant areas of the ministry of the Holy Spirit as:

- His part in producing faith (2:1-5), justification and sanctification of believers (6:11), and their spiritual growth (2:6-16).
- His dwelling in the heart of a believer (3:16-17; 6:19).
- His instructions concerning lives of believers (12:1-3).
- Endowment with gifts of the Spirit and administration of these gifts (12:4-11, 14-30).
- His part in the formation of the Body of Christ (12:12-13).
- His role in building up Church Unity.

Undoubtedly, the theme of church unity also plays a significant role in the Holy Scriptures. Jesus Christ as a High Priest prays to the Heavenly Father about unity of the apostles and all believers (Jn. 17:11-12, 21). He warns His disciples concerning Satan's intentions to sow seeds of dissension among them (Lk. 22:31).

The apostles have frequently touched on that theme, too. James, with a burdened heart, talks about quarrels and fights among the first Christians (Jas. 4:1-3). Peter foresees destruction because of false teaching (2 Peter 2:1-3). John speaks of divisions caused by lack of brotherly love (1 Jn. 3:10-15) and pride of one of the church leaders (3 Jn. 9). Paul deals with the theme of unity in his epistles to the churches in Corinth (1 Cor. 1-4, 11-14) and Galatia (1:7; 5:12).

Often the theme of unity is discussed in the works and epistles of Church Fathers. Ignatius of Antioch, Clement of Rome, in particular, and some others have treated the topic (Posnov 1964:162; Lukyanov 2000:8-12).

We have no need to prove the fact that the theme of unity is still urgent nowadays. Millard J. Erickson as he exposes the theme writes the following:

A topic which has come up for discussion at various periods in history is the unity of the church. The definition of church and the degree of urgency in the discussion have varied throughout the centuries. At times church unity has been a subject of considerable controversy. In the twentieth century, disagreements over the nature of church unity have, ironically, caused a great deal of disunity. Yet, the topic is such that it cannot be avoided (1985:1129-1130).

There exist numerous books and articles dedicated to the person of the Holy Spirit, His ministry, building up of the Church and every individual believer. There have been many commentaries written on the books of the Bible that have discussed to a certain extent questions related to the given topic. The overwhelming majority of researchers

discussing the themes of Church and Pneumatology talk about gifts, fruits and ministries (among them Weiss, B., Stagg, F., Ridderbos, H., Morris, L.). Many of them touch such themes as baptism in the Holy Spirit, dwelling in the Holy Spirit, and oppositely, indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believers, filling with the Holy Spirit (Pate, C.M., Ryrie, C.C.). Many researches mention the role of the Holy Spirit in sanctification, liberty, guidance of believers (Guthrie, D., Pache, R.). Many works speak about the unity in the Body of Christ, but very few say something about the role of the Holy Spirit in the creation of the Church's unity (Pache, R.). Few include the spiritual use of the gifts in the discussion (Dunn, J.D.G., Ellis, E.E.).¹ Less is said on how the believers while realizing their destination and status and comprehensively understanding the role of the Holy Spirit in their lives, can reach unity. Therefore, this topic seems to be relevant and acute.

1.2. The aims of the present research:

1. To identify the objective reasons for Church unity and the role of the Holy Spirit in this process in the context of 1 Corinthians.
2. To determine how a subjective factor (Christian behaviour) may contribute to the creation of unity.
3. To focus on certain questions which do not receive unanimous interpretation to the present day (in terms of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit).²

1.3. Limitations and assumptions

It is important to note here that all three members of the Trinity play an important role in attaining church unity, and Jesus Christ as the Lord and Head of the Church, in particular. Scripture speaks much on this subject. The topic is extensive and we will not be able to treat all aspects of it. We will discuss the constructive role of the Holy Spirit

¹ Many researchers in the sphere of Biblical and Systematic Theology avoid this theme. If someone still touches upon it, he/she does it very briefly and often not very clearly (Pache 1995:112-114).

² "The most serious divisions a church can have are those involving doctrine" (MacArthur 1984:27).

in reaching church unity in the context of 1 Corinthians. In this epistle, the theme of unity has a central place. Paul touches on the topic in chapters 1-4, 11-14.³ The role of the Holy Spirit in creating Church unity is clearly shown in this particular book of the Bible.

The present paper, due to limitations, is not able to encompass such themes as new birth and sanctification of a Christian, which, undoubtedly, are related to the theme of the unity in the Church.⁴

1.4. Research methodology

The study is based on an exegetical analysis; therefore, the integral parts of the paper are:⁵

- (1) Introduction to the epistle (including a search for the historical and cultural context)
- (2) Identification of passages for exegesis
- (3) Grammar, syntax, and structural analysis
- (4) Study of literary features
- (5) Biblical and theological analysis
- (6) Synthesis (summary)
- (7) Application

The analysis of available research in Bible theology and dogmatics as well as in the exegesis of 1 Corinthians is an important constituent of the paper. We have used researched monographs, articles, and journals pertaining to the given topic.

³ It covers half of the epistle, approximately.

⁴ Paul also touches on these themes in 1 Corinthians.

⁵ In this research the English Bible text is taken from the King James Version, the Greek text is taken from the UBS4 -NA27 Greek New Testament. Quotes from research published in the Russian language are given in the translation of the author of the paper.

2. Introduction to the First Epistle to the Corinthians

2.1. The author and the recipients of the Epistle

This epistle is considered to be one of the major epistles in the New Testament. The epistle itself⁶, the Apostolic Fathers⁷, Marcion (Metzger 1998:93-94), and the Muratorian canon testify that the Apostle Paul is the author of the epistle. Even such contemporary scholars, followers of the historical-critical analysis, as Schmithals, Godspeed, Schenke, who doubted Pauline authorship in a number of cases, ascribe this particular epistle to the pen of the apostle to the Gentiles.⁸

Moreover, these researchers as well as other scholars consider 1 Corinthians to belong to the “ancient corpus” of Pauline epistles⁹.

Sosthenes, most probably the chief ruler of the synagogue who believed after the apostle’s preaching in Corinth, was Paul’s co-author in writing 1 Corinthians (Acts 18:17). The epistle is addressed to the Church in Corinth and to all believers in general (1 Cor.1:1-2).

2.2. Paul’s correspondence and communication with the Corinthians

The contemporary reader is aware of two Pauline epistles to the Corinthians. Nonetheless, the epistles themselves make clear that Paul sent at least two other letters to believers in the port city of Corinth.

The chronology of Paul’s correspondence with the church in Corinth can be reconstructed as follows.

The letter known as the First Epistle to the Corinthians had a predecessor, called the “previous” epistle. In the earlier epistle, Paul urged the church not to associate with a

⁶ Paul introduces himself as he addresses his readers.

⁷ These are Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna, Theophilus of Antioch, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, Tertullian, and Augustine. (Metzger 1998:43,49,93-94,119,135,142. Geisler & Nix 1986:289-292).

⁸ Nevertheless, some find integrity problems in 1 Corinthians as well (Guthrie 1996:349-353).

⁹ Kurt Aland bases his view on textual research (Metzger 1998:254).

person who, calling himself a believer, remains in sin, in particular the sin of immorality. That letter was misunderstood. The Corinthians thought that Paul made them dissociate from all sinners.

Having learned that the “previous epistle” was misunderstood and that, as members of Chloe’s household reported, the church suffered divisions, Paul wrote another letter known as the First Epistle to the Corinthians. In the same letter, Paul answers some questions that Corinthians had asked in their response to him (1 Cor. 7:1). He might have also received questions from Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (16:17)¹⁰. Some instructions to the church Paul communicated through Timothy, who went to Macedonia with Erastus before 1 Corinthians had been written and sent and must have gone down to Corinth.

The third epistle to Corinth, known as “sorrowful” (2 Cor. 2:4), Paul wrote upon his arrival to Ephesus from Corinth, which he visited after he had received bad news (Marsh 1969:374).¹¹ That visit appeared to be brief and hurtful for both the apostle and some people in the church (2:1-3). Most probably, Titus was commissioned to deliver that letter and Paul expected to receive a reply through him (2:13; 7:6). Since Paul desired to learn about the Corinthians’ reaction to that letter as soon as possible, he went out to meet his co-worker with “no rest in his spirit”. Having not found him in Troas, he moved on to Macedonia.

The fourth letter known as the Second Epistle to Corinthians was written in Macedonia after Paul had met with Titus and received joyful news concerning a proper impact the “sorrowful epistle” had made in Corinth and the repentance that followed (7:6-8).¹²

¹⁰ Some scholars, e.g. Weiss and Hering, believe that an unknown editor compiled the First Epistle to the Corinthians from different letters. They refer to an abrupt subject shift (Guthrie 1990:453-454). It is hard to conform to this point of view since the Pauline epistle is not a treatise but rather a letter, in which the apostle, probably not at once, answers different questions. Fee (1987:15-16) produces a strong argument defending the integrity of the epistle. Kistemaker underlines that a sudden subject change is typical of Paul (Kistemaker 1993:24-25).

¹¹ It is worthy to note that the Book of Acts says nothing about this visit. Some treated this as an excuse in order to deny it altogether. We will deal with this subject later on.

¹² Bornkamm, Schmithals, and Dean (Guthrie 1990:454-455) also believe that 2 Corinthians was compiled by an unknown editor. Their point of view is not convincing

After receiving encouraging news from Titus, Paul set out for Corinth where he spent the winter and then returned to Jerusalem via Macedonia bringing collections for impoverished Christians.

Before we move on to a detailed study of the First and the Second Epistles to Corinthians, it is necessary to discuss the letters that did not reach the contemporary reader and Paul's visit to Corinth omitted in the Book of Acts.

2.2.1. The "Previous Epistle"

We are not aware of the full content of the letter. However, some information can be extracted from 1 Cor. 5:9-13 (we have mentioned this subject above).

Some scholars consider a passage from 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 to be a part of the "previous epistle" that was accidentally inserted in the body of the Second Epistle.¹³ They set forth a number of arguments. First, they believe that the given passage breaks a logical flow of narration. Second, a phrase "you also enlarged" (6:13) goes together well with "receive us" (7:2). Third, the given passage could have been a text related to 1 Cor. 5:9-13, which was misunderstood in Corinth. A number of scholars suppose that even though 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 barely fits into the context, yet it is not borrowed from any other letter, but rather belongs to the second epistle. They argue that this particular passage is not the only example of a sudden interruption of thought flow in Pauline epistles.¹⁴

(see reference to 1 Corinthians and information concerning the "previous" and the "sorrowful" letters). Tissen and Kistemaker refuse arguments disputing integrity of 2 Corinthians (Tissen 1943:209-210; Kistemaker 1997:10-15). Though the integrity of the Second Epistle to Corinthians is being much discussed, the majority of scholars attribute "various sections" of the epistle to apostle Paul (Carson, Moo, & Morris 1992:262).

¹³ Other scholars consider the given passage to be an insertion from one of the Qumran scrolls since the language of the passage is close to the language of the scroll and the theology of the passage comes close to the Essene thought in dualism, opposition to idols, the concept of the temple of God, and separation from impurity (Guthrie 1990:439).

It is hard to accept that this passage was inserted from another letter; consequently a question arises, "Why was this passage inserted just after 6:13 and why is it unrelated to the context?"

¹⁴ Guthrie writes (1990:438), "Such unexpected digression would be unpardonable in a treatise but is not altogether improbable in a letter. If the epistle was composed at several

On our opinion 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 fits well into the context of the epistle. Paul talks about hardships of following Christ but he also describes blessings that are worthwhile enough to leave the past life behind and walk after the Savior. Christ died for all “that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again” (5:15).

A number of scholars¹⁵ assume that the “previous letter” records Paul’s changed views after the apostolic council and decree (Acts 15:29). Nonetheless, such suggestions are not substantiated well enough.

2.2.2. The “Painful Visit”

Paul describes his visit in the second epistle to Corinthians (2:1-5; 12:14; 13:1-2).¹⁶ Most probably, he paid his visit to Corinth between the time of writing two of these epistles.¹⁷ There are some other views concerning this trip. Some scholars go as far as to deny the occurrence of the visit (Guthrie 1990:340). They base it on the Book of Acts that says nothing about the visit. They interpret the passages mentioned above in a different way: Paul intended to visit Corinth but never did so, because he did not want to upset believers in the city and it was too painful for him. We find it hard to accept this notion. Verses 2:1, 12:14 and 13: 1-2 speak against it.

Other scholars allow for the “painful visit”; however, they believe that it happened before 1 Corinthians. It is also hard to agree with. We doubt that Paul, who said nothing concerning his “painful visit” in the first letter, suddenly recalled it while writing the second one.

sittings, it might well be that Paul paused for a while after 6:13, and upon resuming the letter dwells on the problems of the Christian’s relationship with unbelievers before continuing where he had left off”.

¹⁵ Hurd (Fee 1987:13) holds to this point of view. Fee (1987:13-15) and Barrett (1971:8) oppose it.

¹⁶ Apparently, this visit could not be the first visit of Paul to Corinth as he planted the church there at due time.

¹⁷ The First Epistle is very clear concerning the opposition to Paul in Corinth (Fee 1987:11).

2.2.3. The “Sorrowful Letter”

This letter was composed after 1 Corinthians and the “painful visit” (2:1-5; 12:14; 13:1-2) and was most likely lost. Nevertheless, there exist other points of view.

Some¹⁸ insist that the First Epistle was the “sorrowful” letter. Thus, a sinner in 1 Cor. 5 is identified with a person in 2 Cor. 2. This seems unlikely since the mood of 1 Corinthians as a book is not sorrowful except for chapters 5 and 6. Moreover, 1 Cor. 5 talks about a person who committed sin against his own body (6:18) and the church, whereas 2 Cor. 2 speaks about a person who rather sinned against the apostle himself.¹⁹

Others, such as Hausrath and Kennedy (Guthrie 1990:444), think that a major portion of the “sorrowful” letter was lost and a compiler added a small, preserved passage to the Second Epistle (2 Cor. 10-13). They set forth the following arguments: (1) a sudden change of tone in 2 Cor. 10-13; (2) verses 10:6, 13:2, 13:10 must precede 2:9; 1:23 and 2:3 accordingly, since one might suggest that Paul talks about one visit only; (3) verses 3:1 and 5:12 compared with 2 Cor. 10-13 prompt the idea that 2 Cor. 1-9 and 2 Cor. 10-13 should have interchanged places.

These arguments are hard to accept. First, the change of tone while shifting from chapters 1-9 to 10-13 is quite natural. In the beginning, Paul expresses joy and relief concerning the repentance of the firebrand and the community (ch. 1-7). Then he touches on the subject of collections (ch. 8-9). Finally, (ch. 10-13) he dismisses all accusations against him (voiced possibly during Titus’ visit). Second, there is more logic in arranging verses the way they are: 2:9, 2:3, 1:23 go before 10:6, 13:10, and 13:2. The first two passages refer to the “sorrowful letter” that was lost later, the third one explains why Paul did not see the Corinthians in person after his “painful visit” in order to restore his relationship with the church but rather sent Titus there (2:3). The last three verses (10:6, 13:10, 13:2) communicate Paul’s intention to visit the port city in future. Moreover, it is impossible to rearrange 8:6, 16-24 and 12:18 since the former verses

¹⁸ Such researchers as Alford, Bernard, Denney, Meyer, Weiss, and Zahn (Guthrie 1990:444).

¹⁹ It seems that it was a person who opposed the apostle and upset him during his enforced visit to Corinth (the “painful visit”).

speak about an upcoming Titus' mission in Corinth and the latter demonstrate the completion of the mission. Apparently, chapters 10-13 should follow chapters 1-9.²⁰

Third, verses 3:1 and 5:12, would really have been understood better being placed after chapters 10-13, but only in the case of absence of 1:11-12.

2.3. Time and place of writing

The church of Corinth was planted around the time when Gallio²¹ assumed the office of proconsul in Achaia (Acts 18:2). According to some sources it happened either on July 1, 51 A.D. or July 1, 52 A.D.²² Therefore, Paul's first visit to Corinth took place in 51/52 A.D. There he spent a year and six months (Acts 18:11) and then about three years in Asia (20:31). 1 Corinthians was written at the end of his time in Ephesus, around Easter time (1 Cor. 5:7-8; 16:8). Thus, the approximate date of writing is spring 56/57 A.D.²³ The time of writing of 2 Corinthians is determined by comparing 1 Cor. 16:1,8; 2 Cor. 8:6,10; and 9:2 with Acts 20. Additionally, the date of writing depends on the interpretation of Paul's phrase "a year ago", a period that separated the first epistle from the second one.

Some consider this period to be a segment of time between the writing of 1 Corinthians in the previous year and composition of 2 Corinthians in the following year.²⁴ Others believe that the interval between two epistles should be one year at least. Such notion is based on the conviction that Paul could hardly complete the ministry

²⁰ Carson, Moo & Morris (1992: 268-269) provide similar arguments. Semler's 18-century theory suggesting that chapters 10-13 are Paul's next epistle might turn out to be true after all (Guthrie 1990:342).

²¹ Gallio, a brother to Seneca, a politician and a Stoic philosopher (Rieneker & Meyer 1994:184).

²² It depends on the interpretation of the date inscribed in Delphi. Some hold to the first date (Carson, Moo & Morris 1992:282), others prefer the second date (Harrop 1996:73-74).

²³ There exist other points of view: Carson, Moo & Morris (1992:284) and Boor (1989:12) refer to 55 A.D., Lowery cites 54/55 A.D.

²⁴ A New Year in Macedonia began on September 21, very close to the Jewish one (Guthrie 1990:458).

described in the Book of Acts. The second opinion is a mere assumption, which has not been proved.²⁵ If we agree to the first interpretation, the time and the approximate date of writing of 2 Corinthians is November or December 57 A.D.²⁶

2.4. Historical background

2.4.1. Institution of the Church in Corinth

Paul planted the church in Corinth during his second missionary journey and a 18-months stay in the city. Apostle Paul came to Corinth from Athens. There he found a Jew named Aquila and his wife Priscilla who departed from Rome upon Caesar's Claudius command.²⁷ The couple provided shelter and work for him.

In this port city, Paul, preaching in the synagogue, tried to persuade the Jews in the messianic mission of Jesus. They rejected Paul's testimony and abused him, so he went to the Gentiles, many of whom believed and were baptized (Acts 18:8).²⁸

2.4.2. The City of Corinth

The Romans destructed ancient Corinth in 146 B.C. as they conquered Greece. Corinth in Paul's time was a city restored after Julius Caesar's decree issued in 44 B.C. (Boor 1989:5).

²⁵ Paul was a fast traveler. He traveled from Philippi to Jerusalem with a few lengthy stops for 40 days. It took him five days only to get to Troas from Philippi. Some visits were rather short.

²⁶ This date is determined as follows: the Pentecost (early April 58 A.D., Paul planned to spend it in Jerusalem) minus a trip to Philippi with a few stop-overs, minus Easter and the days of unleavened bread (Acts 20:6), minus three months in Greece (Acts 20:3), minus the period of time from the writing of this Epistle.

²⁷ Tenney states that according to Suetonius the Jews were expelled from Rome under Claudius because of some riots that had taken place "at the instigation of one Chrestus". It is uncertain whether he was referring to a disturbance among the Jews occasioned by persecutions for Christ, or whether Chrestus was the actual name of some insurgent. It is not clear whether Aquila and Priscilla had followed Christ before their arrival to Corinth or believed after Paul's preaching (Tenney 1961:8).

²⁸ The Book of Acts names Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and his household as well as the synagogue rulers Justus and Sosthenes.

The city is located on a narrow isthmus called Diolkos, which is only seven kilometers long and connects northern and southern Greece. In the northwest of the isthmus by the Corinthian Gulf there was a northern harbor Lechaëum, in the southwest there was a southern harbor – Cenchrea, which was located by the Saronic Gulf (Boor (1989:5) calls it Aegean). Ships from western Mediterranean sailed to the northern harbor whereas ships coming from Asia Minor, Palestine, and Egypt used the southern one. If a ship was small enough, it was dragged across Diolkos to another gulf. In case it was too large, the cargo was disembarked and carried by porters across the isthmus to another ship. Mariners preferred a voyage across Diolkos to a course round Cape Malea, the extreme southern tip of Greece, which was known as “dangerous”.²⁹

Due to its convenient location Corinth became an important trading place, a large port city that later became the capital of Achaia (Guthrie 1990:432).

Although surpassed in culture by Athens, it was nevertheless proud of its political status and mental acuteness. It had never been as famed as Athens for its contribution to the arts or philosophy, but it had acquired notoriety for vice and licentiousness in the past. Its name had become a byword for profligacy (Guthrie 1990:432).

“The very word KORINTHIAZESTHAI, to live like a Corinthian, had become a part of the Greek language, and meant to live with drunken and immoral debauchery” (Barclay 1977:2). In Corinth, the temple of Aphrodite stood at Acropolis, around which in small houses twined with roses lived thousands of priestesses of the goddess who sold themselves to every visitor (Boor 1989:6).

The population of Corinth was very mixed. It consisted of rich upper classes, merchants, emancipated slaves (retired Roman soldiers), slaves, and lower social classes (Boor 1989:6; Guthrie 1990:432; Barclay 1977:4; 1 Cor. 7:20-24). The latter were much despised by the former (Carson, Moo & Morris 1992:263).

The religious life in Corinth was also rather diverse. Parts of the city inhabitants were adherents of the state religion based on polytheism, on the cult of gods of Olympus. Others sought spiritual satisfaction in philosophy. Some searched for truth in mystical cults and rituals, others were attracted by oriental cults, the Egyptian cults in

²⁹ Barclay notes: “The Greeks had two sayings which showed what they thought of it – “Let him who sails round Malea forget his home”, and “Let him who sails round Malea first make his will” (Barclay 1977:1). Perhaps, these dangers were reefs, winds, and pirate ships.

particular (Boor 1989:6). The mix of Greek philosophy, Buddhism, Egyptian religion, Mandaeans and Sabaeans initiated the rise of Gnosticism (Averincev 1993:415-416) that made a certain impact on believers in Corinth. There were also followers of Judaism in the city (compare Acts 18).

2.5. The purpose of 1 Corinthians

The following arguments serve as possibilities as to why Paul wrote to 1 Corinthians.

*To call the church to unity*³⁰

Some from Chloe's household (1 Cor. 1:11) and possibly Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus (16:17) had informed Paul about disunity in the church of Corinth. Paul, in his epistle to Corinth, points out some reasons that led to community schisms and makes suggestions how to solve the conflict situation.

(1) One of the reasons that caused disunity were community splinter groups, which grew as result of affiliation with different spiritual authorities. Some considered themselves admirers of Paul³¹, some of Apollos³², some of Cephas, and some of Christ. What led believers to schisms in this city? Apparently, the problem was a partial understanding of baptism with water. The Corinthians focused on the giver of baptism more than on baptism as a spiritual act.

The Greek phrase "in the name of" is derived from accounting, which means "on the name or account of". Apparently, baptism was viewed as a transfer, an act by means of which a baptized person yielded himself to be owned or disciplined by Him in whose name he was baptized. This is a basis for Pauline argumentation in 1 Cor. 1:12-13: to say "I am Paul's [disciple]" implied that I "was baptized in Paul's name" (Dunn 1998:198).

It is clear why Paul's reaction was so strong, "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"³³

³⁰ Some believe that the church split had a decisive influence on the attitude towards Paul (Carson, Moo & Morris 1992:280).

³¹ Demonstrating commitment to their spiritual father.

³² Paul's successor, an eloquent preacher (1 Cor. 3:6).

(2) The second reason was a misunderstanding of the Cross as well as environmental, philosophical, and cultural influence.

The Cross of Jesus was a strange idea to both Jews and Greeks. A message of God crucified was a stumbling block unto the Jews and foolishness unto the Greeks (Tarasenko 2000:34).

The Corinthians highly respected human wisdom and under the influence of Greek philosophy and Jewish worldview they could not comprehend that Christ's sacrifice was the basis for their significance (1 Cor. 1:30).³⁴

(3) The third reason of divisions was a weak spiritual condition (3:1-3).

The Corinthian community was torn apart by "envying, and strife, and divisions". Misunderstanding of the Cross, obviously, resulted in poor spiritual condition.

(4) The fourth reason is a misunderstanding of their destination (4:8-13). The Corinthians aspired high status in earthly life. Paul, in his turn, reveals to them that God has something greater in store for His children. Here on earth, they should not seek power and dominance but look for ways of ministering to other people. They must not seek human wisdom but strengthen their faith in Christ crucified (foolishness). The Corinthians must not pursue fame and glory but respect others. Paul was a living example for them.

(5) The fifth reason that caused disunity was a wrong view of relationships between husband and wife and, therefore, different requirements for outward appearance (11:3-19).³⁵ Paul as he refers to church contentions uses the same word as in 1:10.

(6) Another reason was an unequal economic, social and race status of believers (7:21-22; 11:20-22; 12:13).

³³ "Accordingly, by reminding the Corinthians of what did not happen in their baptism (i.e., they were not uniquely baptized by Paul so as to form a unique belonging to Paul), Paul points them to the unifying reality achieved in the sacred story of the cross" (Carlson 1993:260).

³⁴ This will be discussed later.

³⁵ The word φιλόνηκος (11:16) and the phrase ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀκούω σχίσματα ἐν ὑμῖν (11:18) indicate that there was no agreement concerning the issue. Interestingly enough, the word σχίσματα is applied in 1:10 as well.

(7) Still another reason is the superiority of those, who had bright gifts of the Spirit (the gift of tongues, in particular) over those who possessed none of those gifts, the misunderstanding of the Church's role and ways of ministering with gifts (ch. 12-14; 12:25).

To clarify the contents of the previous letter

We have discussed this earlier (see p.7).

To give answers to the questions of the Corinthians

Chapter 7, for instance, contains Paul's response concerning marriage (7:1).

To provide a correct understanding of Christian freedom and oppose the rising Gnostic ideas in church circles³⁶

Paul draws their attention to the essence of Christian freedom:

- It does not break out of unity (ch.1-4).
- It is found in godly life (ch.5-6, 8-10).
- It is limited to God's instructions concerning marriage (ch.7).
- It is found in the context of family relationships (11:2-16).
- It is seen through Christian love and clear conscience (11:17-34).
- It does not break out of God given rules concerning church relations (ch.12-14).

The key verses in the Epistle (6:12 and 10:23-24) talk about the essence of Christian freedom that leads to eternal life (ch.15).

The apostle stresses the idea that we can possess all wisdom and knowledge by abiding in Christ and having the correct understanding of the Cross (1:18-2:16).³⁷

To correct erroneous eschatological views of the Corinthians

Considerable portions of Scripture contain proofs concerning the resurrection of Jesus and Christian believers (15:3-23) that which some have doubted (15:2). Paul

³⁶ Schmithals considers Gnostics to be Paul's main opponents (Carson, Moo & Morris 1992:279).

³⁷ Paul directly opposes Gnostic ideas. However, we may agree with Wilson (Guthrie 1990:434) that the rising Gnostic ideas at Paul's time must be distinguished from later Gnosticism.

points out that the spiritual rebirth and the life in the Spirit are the important conditions of resurrection (ch. 15:37-50).

To demonstrate God's principles in ministering to each other with gifts and point to the importance of guidance of the Holy Spirit

Paul shows the Corinthians that manifestations of the Spirit and ministries proceed from God who gives them to every person for his/her profit (12:7,11,18). Therefore, each believer should be guided by the Holy Spirit (12:2-3) and by principles of love (ch. 13) in his/her ministry in order to serve others in the first place (14:12). The use of the gifts in a right way and a correct understanding of the destination leads to God's blessings (14:40).

3.The role of the Holy Spirit in building up church unity

3.1. The Holy Spirit as a counselor (Ch. 2)

3.1.2. The Holy Spirit and the Gospel are the foundation of faith (2:1-5)

Apostle Paul first talks about the role of the Holy Spirit in building up the Corinthian church when he deals with an acute problem of disunity (1 Cor. 1:10-4:21; 1:10-12; 2:4-5).

The Corinthian church faced divisions. The church had split into various groups of admirers and each faction regarded itself superior to others. A misunderstanding of the Cross by the Corinthians as well environmental, philosophical, and cultural influences³⁸ resulted in severe contentions. The Cross of Jesus was a strange idea to both Jews and Greeks. A message of God crucified was a stumbling block unto the Jews and foolishness unto the Greeks.

The Jews required signs and miracles from the Messiah as an evidence of His claims (1 Cor. 1:22; Mt. 16:1). Christ died on the cross “helpless and left as a criminal” (Boor 1989:42). The Greeks demanded rational confirmation of His divine nature, He was expected to answer all their questions and solve all their problems. According to Celsus (177-180), the death of Christ was a mere “foolishness”; one could only shake his head at it and give it an ironic smile (Boor 1989:43).

The Apostle Paul calls for unity of spirit and thinking. He points out the cause of divisions, one of which was the misunderstanding of the Cross. He stresses Christ’s sufferings and the significance of His Sacrifice.

The Cross of Christ – the grounds for significance

The Cross is the central theme of the Good News. The Cross, rather than human wisdom, is the source of our salvation. No human wisdom compares to a simple truth of the Cross. Human wisdom cannot save (1:21). Instead, all treasures of the human soul such as wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption we possess in Christ due to His sufferings (1:18-31).

³⁸ Greece in Paul’s time was full of philosophers (see Acts 17).

A Christian should boast not in his relations to a famous person, in his wisdom, or his influence in society, but rather in his Lord (1:30). In Christ, through faith, a person accomplishes all that which secular society (rich, wise...) cannot achieve throughout their lives. All that is of the world is vain compared to divine treasures.

The Cross of Christ is the foundation of faith

Paul writes:

οὐ γὰρ ἔκρινά τι εἰδέναι ἐν ὑμῖν εἰ μὴ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τοῦτον ἑσταυρωμένον... ἵνα ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ᾖ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ (1 Cor. 2:2,5)

“The power of God” is a proclamation of Christ crucified, a word about the Cross (1:18, 23-24).

Why is exactly the Cross the foundation of the Christian faith? Because a person's justification, reconciliation with God, and salvation are impossible without Christ's sufferings.

ἔτι γὰρ Χριστὸς ὄντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν ἔτι κατὰ καιρὸν ὑπὲρ ἀσεβῶν ἀπέθανεν. μόλις γὰρ ὑπὲρ δικαίου τις ἀποθανεῖται· ὑπὲρ γὰρ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ τάχα τις καὶ τολμᾷ ἀποθανεῖν· συνίστησιν δὲ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπην εἰς ἡμᾶς ὁ θεός, ὅτι ἔτι ἀμαρτωλῶν ὄντων ἡμῶν Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανεν. πολλῶ οὖν μᾶλλον δικαιωθέντες νῦν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ σωθησόμεθα δι' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς. εἰ γὰρ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, πολλῶ μᾶλλον καταλλαγέντες σωθησόμεθα ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ· (Rom. 5:6-10)

Why is it the basis of our faith?

(1) A Christian is not able to build straight relationships with God and live a righteous life outside of understanding of the essence of Christ's sacrifice. As a sinner, a Christian crucifies Christ all by himself and distances himself from God (Heb. 5:11-6:12).

Preaching Christ crucified is the beginnings of the doctrine, milk for babes in Christ. A Christian cannot grow in perfection unless he receives them. This idea can be traced in 1 Cor. 2:1-5; 3:1-3 and Heb. 5:11-6:3.

1 Cor. 3:1-4

- A1** Κάγω, ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἠδυνήθην λαλήσαι ὑμῖν ὡς πνευματικοῖς 3:1a
B1 ἀλλ' ὡς σαρκίνοις, ὡς νηπίοις ἐν Χριστῷ. 3:1b
- A2** γάλα ὑμᾶς ἐπότισα, οὐ βρώμα· 3:2a-b
B2 οὐπω γὰρ ἐδύνασθε. ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἔτι νῦν δύνασθε, ἔτι γὰρ σαρκικοί 3:2c-4
 ἐστε. ὅπου γὰρ ἐν ὑμῖν ζῆλος καὶ ἔρις, οὐχὶ σαρκικοί ἐστε καὶ
 κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατεῖτε; ὅταν γὰρ λέγη τις· ἐγὼ μὲν εἶμι
 Παύλου, ἕτερος δέ· ἐγὼ Ἀπολλῶ, οὐκ ἄνθρωποί ἐστε;

1 Cor. 2-3

- A1** οὐ γὰρ ἔκρινά τι εἰδέναι ἐν ὑμῖν εἰ μὴ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν
 καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρωμένον. 2:2
B1 Σοφίαν δὲ λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις 2:6a
- A2** γάλα ὑμᾶς ἐπότισα, 3:2a
B2 οὐ βρώμα· 3:2b

Heb. 5:12-14

- A1** καὶ γεγόνατε χρείαν ἔχοντες γάλακτος 5:12c
B1 [καὶ] οὐ στερεᾶς τροφῆς. 5:12d
- A2** πᾶς γὰρ ὁ μετέχων γάλακτος ἄπειρος λόγου δικαιοσύνης,
 νήπιος γάρ ἐστιν· 5:13
B2 τελείων δέ ἐστιν ἡ στερεὰ τροφή, τῶν διὰ τὴν ἔξιν
 τὰ αἰσθητήρια γεγυμνασμένα ἐχόντων πρὸς διάκρισιν
 καλοῦ τε καὶ κακοῦ. 5:14

The analysis of the passages given above allows us to arrive at several important conclusions:

- (1) Regular food (wisdom) is given to perfect.

- (2) Going back to the first principles of the doctrine of Christ equals going back to milk.
- (3) Milk symbolizes the word of truth (the word of righteousness).
- (4) The word of righteousness points to the first principles of the doctrine of Christ.
- (5) The first principles of the doctrine of Christ enhances the doctrine that teaches concerning repentance from dead works, faith toward God, the doctrine of baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

A closer study of the Bible shows that the teaching concerning the necessity of Christ's death includes all aspects specified in Heb. 6:1-2, e.g. justification is impossible without faith. In Rom. 5:1,9 we read, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ... Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Apparently, faith is an inseparable part of the doctrine of justification and righteousness. Righteousness is received by faith in Christ crucified.

A faith based on human wisdom and hero worship takes away from Christ and results in contentions and a sense of superiority. The faith based on Christ and the understanding of His Sacrifice (1 Cor. 3:11) takes a person to the One God and to unity. Paul stresses this idea in his epistle by reminding the recipients that the theme of the Cross was central to his message at the time of the Corinthian church formation (2:1-5).³⁹ Not human wisdom but preaching of Christ crucified and the work of the Holy Spirit produced faith in the Corinthians.

Κάγὼ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ἦλθον οὐ καθ' ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίας καταγγέλλων ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ. 2 οὐ γὰρ ἔκρινά τι εἰδέναι ἐν ὑμῖν εἰ μὴ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρωμένον. 3 κάγὼ ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ καὶ ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῷ ἐγενόμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς, 4 καὶ ὁ λόγος μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμά μου οὐκ ἐν πειθοι[ς] σοφίας [λόγοις] ἀλλ' ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως, 5 ἵνα ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ᾖ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ (1 Cor. 2:1-5).

A parallelism used in 2:4-5 states clearly that not Paul's wisdom or spirit but the Holy Spirit contributed to the birth and the making of the faith in Corinth.

³⁹ It does not imply that Paul did not preach anything else in Corinth. It means that his preaching of Christ crucified prevailed (MacArthur 1984:55-56).

- A1** καὶ ὁ λόγος μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμά μου οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖ[ς] σοφίας [λόγοις] 2:4a
B1 ἀλλ' ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως, 2:4b
A2 ἵνα ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ᾖ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων 2:5a
B2 ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ. 2:5b

Chapter 2, verse 4 speaks about the power of God and, therefore, the Spirit of God. In 1 Corinthians Paul talks about faith that comes from hearing the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. It is not an exception. He discusses it in his epistles to Romans (15:17-19) and 1 Thessalonians (1:5). John presents the same idea in his Gospel (3:3,5; 16:7-15). The Word of God can reach a human heart only with the help of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 4:20). The Holy Spirit admonishes a man concerning his sin and makes truths regarding righteousness and judgment accessible. Only He could make the mystery (τὸ μυστήριον) of God⁴⁰ simple enough so that a limited human could comprehend it.

That is why Paul was “in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling” as he preached the Gospel in Corinth. Some theologians assume that the apostle described his physical weakness and fear experienced after a “failure” in Athens (Allen 1974:306). However, he rather meant his littleness and spiritual dependence of God. In his commentary to 1 Corinthians Raymond B. Brown expresses a very important idea:

Who can deal with holy things and not tremble? Who can deliver the word of God without fear that belongs to reverence? Is it the bigness of his mission that makes Paul so conscious of his littleness (cit. Allen 1974:306).

MacDonald (2000:836) states a similar thought, “The treasure of the Gospel was contained in an earthly vessel so that the superiority of power belonged to God, not Paul. He was an example of how God uses weak to affect mighty”.

The Holy Spirit works when a person recognizes his/her total helplessness and dependence on God.

Summarizing all above we can say that the message of Christ crucified (and His sacrifice) played and is still playing a vital role of an initiator and a maker of our faith.

⁴⁰ The word τὸ μυστήριον in v. 2:1 is preferred to μαρτύριον (Metzger, B.M. A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, p. 545). The word μυστήριον is used in Ɑ⁴⁶ Ɱ* A C 88 436 and elsewhere.

Non-believers as well as spiritual babes (called carnal in the text) are in special need of it. Preaching must not be based on human wisdom and eloquence but the power of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit.

Since the message about the crucified Christ is *contrary to the wisdom of this world* it can only be believed and thus be God's δύναμις through the powerful activity of the Spirit. The charismatic-thaumaturgical dimension of the δύναμις of the Spirit is here not to be excluded (Gräbe 2000:66).

3.1.2. The Holy Spirit opens spiritual truths to those who are "perfect"-2:6-16

The structural analysis of 2:1-3:4 helps to see this significant truth in 2:6-16 (see p. 27). Whereas verses 2:1-5 and 3:1-4 talk about the role of the Holy Spirit in the development of faith, verses 2:6-16 discuss His task in ministering to mature Christians. The latter received the wisdom of God through the apostles by the Holy Spirit. This wisdom was "of God in a mystery, which none of the princes of this world knew".⁴¹

We can note a chiasm used by the author.

- | | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| A1 | Σοφίαν δὲ λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις, σοφίαν δὲ οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου 2:6-7
οὐδὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου τῶν καταργουμένων·
ἀλλὰ λαλοῦμεν θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην,
ἣν προώρισεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων εἰς δόξαν ἡμῶν, | |
| B1 | ἣν οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἔγνωκεν· 2:8
εἰ γὰρ ἔγνωσαν, οὐκ ἂν τὸν κύριον τῆς δόξης ἔσταύρωσαν. | |
| B2 | ἀλλὰ καθὼς γέγραπται· ἃ ὀφθαλμὸς οὐκ εἶδεν καὶ οὐς οὐκ
ἤκουσεν καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἀνέβη,
ἃ ἠτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν. 2:9 | |
| A2 | ἡμῖν δὲ ἀπεκάλυψεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος· 2:10
τὸ γὰρ πνεῦμα πάντα ἐραυνᾷ, καὶ τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ. | |

⁴¹ Apparently, "the princes of this world" must be understood as Jewish and Gentile leaders (MacArthur 1993:86) as well as the leaders of the fallen angelic world (Eph. 6:12). Undoubtedly, the latter influenced the former.

Winter B. believes that under "the princes of the present world" one should understand much-admired eloquent orators and philosophers of the time, which claimed to be "perfect". They were supposed to become future rulers and leaders of cities and states (Winter 1994:1165).

Κάγῳ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ἦλθον οὐ καθ' ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίας καταγγέλλων ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ.	1
οὐ γὰρ ἔκρινά τι εἰδέναι ἐν ὑμῖν εἰ μὴ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρωμένον.	2
κἀγὼ ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ καὶ ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῷ ἐγενόμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς,	3
καὶ ὁ λόγος μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμά μου οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖ[ς] σοφίας [λόγοις] ἀλλ' ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως,	4
ἵνα ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ᾖ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ. 5	
Σοφίαν δὲ λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις, σοφίαν δὲ οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου οὐδὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου τῶν καταργουμένων.	6
ἀλλὰ λαλοῦμεν θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ, τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην,	7a
ἣν προώρισεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων εἰς δόξαν ἡμῶν.	7b
ἣν οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἔγνωκεν,	8a
εἰ γὰρ ἔγνωσαν, οὐκ ἂν τὸν κύριον τῆς δόξης ἐσταύρωσαν. 8b	
ἀλλὰ καθὼς γέγραπται, "Ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς οὐκ εἶδεν καὶ οὐκ ἤκουσεν καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἀνέβη, ἃ ἠτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν.	9
ἡμῖν δὲ ἀπεκάλυψεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος.	10a
τὸ γὰρ πνεῦμα πάντα ἐραυνᾷ, καὶ τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ.	10b
τίς γὰρ οἶδεν ἀνθρώπων τὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ;	11a
οὕτως καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐδεὶς ἔγνωκεν εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ. 11b	
ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου ἐλάβομεν ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα εἰδῶμεν τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν.	12
ἃ καὶ λαλοῦμεν οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις ἀλλ' ἐν διδακτοῖς πνεύματος, πνευματικοῖς πνευματικᾶ συγκρίνοντες. 13	
ψυχικὸς δὲ ἄνθρωπος οὐ δέχεται τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ, μωρία γὰρ αὐτῷ ἐστίν,	
καὶ οὐ δύναται γινῶναι,	
ὅτι πνευματικῶς ἀνακρίνεται.	14
ὁ δὲ πνευματικὸς ἀνακρίνει [τὰ] πάντα,	
αὐτὸς δὲ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς ἀνακρίνεται	15
τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου, ὃς συμβιβάσει αὐτόν;	
ἡμεῖς δὲ νοῦν Χριστοῦ ἔχομεν.	16
Κἀγὼ, ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἠδυνήθην λαλῆσαι ὑμῖν ὡς πνευματικοῖς ἀλλ' ὡς σαρκίνοις, ὡς νηπίοις ἐν Χριστῷ.	3:1
γάλα ὑμᾶς ἐπότισα, οὐ βρῶμα, οὐπῶ γὰρ ἐδύνασθε. ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἔτι νῦν δύνασθε,	2
ἔτι γὰρ σαρκικοί ἐστε.	3a
ὅπου γὰρ ἐν ὑμῖν ζῆλος καὶ ἔρις, οὐχὶ σαρκικοί ἐστε καὶ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατεῖτε;	3b
ὅταν γὰρ λέγη τις, Ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμι Παύλου, ἕτερος δέ, Ἐγὼ Ἀπολλῶ, οὐκ ἀνθρωποὶ ἐστε;	4

The wisdom of God revealed through the apostle to mature Christians,⁴² led by the Holy Spirit, offered what God had prepared for them in His Son (2:9-10).⁴³ If the “princes of this world” had received God’s plan of salvation of which The Cross is a central and inseparable part, they would not have crucified Christ.⁴⁴

We face a problem as we study chapters 1-3. In 1:23-24 we read that the preaching Christ crucified for Jews and Greeks, that are called, is the power and the wisdom of God. This very theme is the main content of the message to unbelievers (1:17) and babes in Christ (2:1-5; 3:1-3). Nonetheless, as we read 2:6-10 we note that the wisdom of God is being preached to perfect (mature) Christians. How do we solve this disagreement?

The point is that preaching the Cross relates not only to the theme of justification but also to the themes of sanctification (Heb. 5:11-14), discernment of God’s will (2 Cor. 5:14-15), and the future of the Church (1 Cor. 2:6-10). The Corinthians must have received the teaching concerning justification since they turned to Christ. Paul calls them “saints called by God”. But the context of the epistle testifies that the themes of sanctification and obedience to God’s will were neglected by the Corinthians (the majority of them were carnal Christians – 1 Cor. 3:1-3). Therefore, it is natural to conclude that the theme of what God had prepared for those who loved Him could not

⁴² When Paul says, “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit... Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God”, he means apostles and their co-workers in the first place (MacDonald 2000:837).

⁴³ The word “revealed” (ἀπεκάλυψεν) is in past tense (1 aorist). Thus, vs. 2:9-10 do not refer to the revelation of the future to every individual believer. Here it is not said about some unanticipated gifts (Winter 1994:1166), but Christian heritage. It is hard to agree with MacDonald (2000:837) and MacArthur (1984:61) who insist that vs. 2:7-10 cannot speak about heavens (distant future). It is rather difficult to preach about Christ’s sacrifice without mentioning an ultimate purpose, that is, eternity. The words “ordained before the world unto our glory” confirm this truth (IBNT 1987:22).

⁴⁴ It is hard to believe that having understood the meaning of Christ’s sacrifice and the consequences of following Him, both Jewish and Gentile leaders would crucify the Messiah. We doubt that the princes of the fallen angelic world would have crucified Jesus if they had grasped the essence of His death: Christ’s death defeated them (Col. 2:14-15).

be the core of Pauline preaching about the Cross. This teaching Paul intended for mature Christians.⁴⁵

The same thought is partly expressed by Lowery (1983:510-511):

“The message of the Cross” (1 Cor. 1:18) concerned more than justification. It also concerned sanctification. It called for a renewal of attitude and action in response to God’s revelation. It called for righteousness in thought and deed (Heb. 5:11-14). And this part of the message of “Christ ... crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2), this solid food (3:2), the Corinthians had spurned. As a result, they were still worldly (v.3).

It is hard to agree with the idea that the doctrine of sanctification is solid food.⁴⁶ The author of the Epistle to Hebrews refers to the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, to milk food (though he uses other terms such as repentance from dead works, faith toward God, the doctrine of baptisms, etc.).⁴⁷

Verses 2:10-12 answer the following question, “How can mature Christians discern the mysteries of God and the future?”

- A1** ἡμῖν δὲ ἀπεκάλυψεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος·
τὸ γὰρ πνεῦμα πάντα ἐραυνᾷ,
καὶ τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ. 2:10
- B1** τίς γὰρ οἶδεν ἀνθρώπων τὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα
τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ; 2:11a
- B2** οὕτως καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐδεὶς ἔγνωκεν εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ. 2:11b
- A1** ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου ἐλάβομεν
ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ,
ἵνα εἰδῶμεν τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν· 2:12

The Holy Spirit revealed these truths to early Christians through the apostles who received the Spirit of God; today we have them made known through Scripture and

⁴⁵ Perhaps, not for the Corinthians. Different verb tenses in 2:1-5, 3:1-3, and 2:6-7 confirm that.

Barclay divides the message of the Cross into “kerygma” (elementary things) and “didache” (detailed explanation of the basics) and states that the Corinthians were satisfied with the former and had no desire to study important aspects of Christian doctrines (1977:30).

⁴⁶ Solid food is knowing of the Christian heritage granted by God (2:12). The word “χαρισθέντα” translated as “gift, charity” is mostly used in the Bible in relation to God.

⁴⁷ The doctrine of sanctification is quite simple to grasp; however, it is not easy to accept it with one’s heart and actually implement it.

mature believers. Only the Holy Spirit knows the mysteries of God and He is the Only One who can reveal them. A simple reference to Paul's words "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" clarifies the text. Compare also Origen's "Origins" (Origen [1936] 1993:141):

So, together with many other things through the grace of the Holy Spirit the majestic gift is being revealed that before Christ a few only, i.e. the prophets themselves and barely one person among the people of God, were able to rise above the carnal understanding of the prophetic writings or the Law of Moses and grasp in the Law and the prophets the bigger idea, some spiritual meaning. Now it is given to an uncountable multitude of believers... And this understanding, undoubtedly, is given to all by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Verses 2:12-13 contain the doctrine of inspiration (Mitchell 1978:381). Verse 12 talks about the content of the inspiration whereas verse 13 describes the channel of communication of that inspiration. The content of the inspiration is knowledge given by God. The means of communication is "comparing spiritual things with spiritual". How do we understand the last words?

Let us consider the following phrase "ὃ καὶ λαλοῦμεν... πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες".⁴⁸ The word "πνευματικοῖς" in dative case can be translated as an adjective of masculine or neutral gender. The word "πνευματικὰ", an adjective of neutral gender in plural, can be considered as in nominative or in accusative case.

Συγκρίνοντες is a nominative participle in plural, Present Tense, and Active Voice. It translates as combining, comparing, interpreting, explaining, and clarifying. It stands in a predicative position with no article. This participle belongs to the category of means of the main verb "λαλοῦμεν" (Wallace 1996:628; Meychen 1994:79). It is translated as an adverbial participle or as a predicate of a subordinate clause and answers a question, "How do we speak?" The following literal translations are possible: 1) proclaim (speak)... explaining spiritual things to spiritual; 2) speak... explaining spiritual by spiritual things; 3) speak... (explaining) clarifying spiritual by spiritual things.

Bauer (1979:774) gives three possible variants of translation: 1) expressing spiritual truths through spiritual forms (words); 2) explaining spiritual truths to spiritual

⁴⁸ The phrase πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες is ambiguous (Louw & Nida 1989: Vol.1, 406).

people; 3) comparing (contrasting) the received gifts and revelations with those that are to be received.

MacDonald suggests three similar variants: 1) teaching spiritual truths through words given by the Spirit; 2) by communicating spiritual truths to spiritual people; 3) comparing truths found in one part of the Bible with truths from another part. He prefers the first variant of translation to the other two (2000:838).

In our opinion yet another translation may be possible, “comparing truths given by the Spirit with Scripture” (cf. 1 Cor. 14:29; 2 Pe. 1:16-21).

Which variant of translation is preferable? The context, grammar, and syntax may point to an answer.

Let us consider the passage from chapter 2:6-15.

6 Σοφίαν δὲ λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις ... 7 ἀλλὰ λαλοῦμεν θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην ... 12 ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου ἐλάβομεν ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα εἰδῶμεν τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν· 13 ἃ καὶ λαλοῦμεν οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις ἀλλ’ ἐν διδακτοῖς πνεύματος, πνευματικοῖς πνευματικῶς συγκρίνοντες. 14 ψυχικὸς δὲ ἄνθρωπος οὐ δέχεται τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ· μωρία γὰρ αὐτῷ ἐστὶν καὶ οὐ δύναται γινῶναι, ὅτι πνευματικῶς ἀνακρίνεται. 15 ὁ δὲ πνευματικὸς ἀνακρίνει [τὰ] πάντα, αὐτὸς δὲ ὑπ’ οὐδενὸς ἀνακρίνεται.

Let us focus on the word λαλοῦμεν (to speak, whisper, chat). It is used three times in the given passage (2:6,7,13). The context indicates that this word expresses the same thought: the wisdom is communicated to mature (perfect) Christians (among mature Christians). Apparently, this thought that originated in v.6 is continued in v.13.

Now let us pay attention to the word συγκρίνοντες (from συγκρίνω). It is used only two times in the New Testament (1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Cor. 10:12) (Schmoller 1994:466). The table below demonstrates the use of this word in various translations.

	contemplating	interpreting	expressing	comparing
1 Cor.2:13	ST	BBT, GNB, RSV	NIV	KJV
2 Cor.10:12				ST, BBT, GNB, KJV, RSV, NIV

This is a compound word. The stem κρινω can be translated as “decide, prefer, evaluate, hold a view, make legal decision, condemn, and rule” (Louw & Nida 1989:Vol.2, 147). Having analyzed all possible meanings of the word “κρινω” one may conclude that all of them imply some kind of action (decision, evaluation,

condemnation, etc.) exercised on the basis of established views and strong convictions. This word refers a reader or a listener to a final phase of a mental process and decision-making rather than to contemplation and formation of opinion. Prefix *συν* in complex words gives them a meaning of correlation (Young 1994:101), participation and simultaneous projection of an action on all parts of a particular subject (Weisman 1899:1186).

The words “contemplate” and “compare” reflect on the thinking process and formation of conviction. Taking the discussed above into consideration one may conclude that Paul, who used the word *συγκρίνοντες* as a means of communicating wisdom, could not imply those meanings. The same applies to the word “reasoning, arguing”.

Verses 8 and 14 answer the following question, “Why Paul speaks about hidden wisdom among mature Christians?” Natural men (who do not know Christ) do not understand (cannot comprehend) this message. They do not have the Holy Spirit who knows all things of God and can make them known to people (v.12). Carnal Christians, the third category of people described by Paul, cannot comprehend this message because they are not able to feed on solid food (2:1-5; 3:1-3) as a result of poor spiritual condition.

Mature Christians, as the context states, are spiritual believers.

Taking into consideration that the main task of a prophesying person (14:3) is to edify (to instruct concerning unfamiliar truths as well), exhort, and comfort the church, one may conclude that the words “explaining, interpreting, and clarifying” are the most suitable for translation of the word “*συγκρίνοντες*”.

The word “*πνευματικοίς*” (spiritual) most likely relates to spiritual (mature) Christians. They are the ones who can grasp spiritual truths. It is indicated by the connecting word “*κρινω*” (vs. 13-15) combined with various prefixes. *Συγκρινει* means “to make clear or plain”. *Ανακρινει* means “to understand the explained thing, to put all interpretations together”.⁴⁹

The word *πνευματικὰ* implies spiritual truths. Thus, *ἃ καὶ λαλοῦμεν... πνευματικοίς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες* should be translated as, “Which things also we speak... making spiritual (truths) clear to spiritual (Christians)”. However, we must not

⁴⁹ Prefix *ανα* in compound words means going up or down (Weisman 1899:80).

exclude another version, “speak... interpreting spiritual (content) by spiritual (content)”.⁵⁰

In Bishop Bezobrazov’s translation of the Bible into the Russian language, the phrase “interpreting spiritual by spiritual” is not a mono-semantic phrase, but a rather universal and demands additional interpretation by the reader.

In summary, we can say that spiritual Christians require an interpretation of the hidden wisdom concerning their heritage in Christ, which can be grasped only through the Spirit dwelling in them. A Christian, who is able to comprehend this truth in a course of time, is a spiritual believer; otherwise, he is a carnal one. Therefore, in this case the Holy Spirit appears as a Counselor and a Teacher.

3.2. The Holy Spirit is an administrator in the church (Ch. 12-14)

As we touch upon this theme, we should discuss the gift of tongues in detail. This issue was rather urgent for the Corinthian believers. They had different views on that matter. First, they disagreed whether each person was supposed to possess that gift or not (1 Cor. 12:25). Second, there was no unanimous opinion concerning the ministry of gifts in the church (14:39). Consequently, a number of problems arose. One group of people, who possessed the gift, felt superior to other believers. The rest envied them. Some people were eager to use the gift in the church. Others prohibited them to do so.

For Paul, who was far away from their city, it was not easy to produce a universal solution to the problem, since there could be some people in the Corinthian community with a false gift of tongues (FLSBNT 1997:317-318).

According to the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, glossalalia was mentioned in Hindu Vedas about 1000 B.C. as well as in *Sutra Yoga* by Patanjali and Tantric books of Tibet Lamaism. A remarkable ancient philosopher Plato in his works *Ion*, *Apology*, and *Timaeus* describes ecstatic tongues of a famous prophetess from Delphi, a priestess of Dodona and Sibylla, as an example of glossalalia in ancient Greece (Porublev 1995:6).

⁵⁰ In this case adjectives πνευματικοίς and πνευματικά, though used in plural, may be translated in singular communicating a general meaning (Meychen 1994:30).

Besides, glossalalia was known in mystic cults of Dionysus, Osiris, and Orphism. The cult worship was generally accompanied by a high level of emotional condition and uncontrolled behavior (Porublev 1995:6).

Despite the complexity of the situation, Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 7:40), suggests a solution to the problem in the church of Corinth. Basically, chapters 12-14 are devoted to this subject.⁵¹

Chapters 12-14 are devoted to the theme of gifts of the Spirit and ministering with these gifts in the Church. Verse 12:1 introduces us to the broad issue. It says, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant". MacDonald (2000: 881) writes in his commentary, "The majority of translations suggest adding the word "gifts" to complete the thought. However, the next verse gives a hint to assume, that Paul could have thought not only about the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, but also about evil spirits". It is necessary to note that the third variant is preferable, which speaks about "spiritual deeds" or "spiritual Christians" (cf. 2:12-3:1-3; 14:37) and the ways they should treat gifts entrusted to them.

The Corinthians wrote concerning *spiritual gifts* – the Greek is ambiguous and can be rendered "spiritual people". The opening discussion would suggest that the Corinthians' question in v 1 related to the way in which those who possessed the spirit exercised their ministry in the church meeting. Paul's first concern is to clear up their ignorance (Winter 1994:1180).

Before we move on to a detailed study of chapters 12-14, let us do a structural analysis of their content. The structural analysis will help us to identify the main themes and sub-themes of the given chapters (structural outline can be found in the Appendix). Syntax analysis of the verses that contain some grammar difficulties will be done in the course of the study.

The first verse of chapter 12 introduces the new topic of spiritual gifts. The last verse of the chapter concludes the topic, which then continues in chapter 14.

In chapter 13, Paul speaks about the main condition for the use of gifts in the church. This arises from comparing 1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1 to chapter 13. Verses 12:31 and 14:1 are arranged as a chiasm.

⁵¹ Earlier (ch. 12-13) Paul partly discussed the problem of gifts as he talked about the importance of each of them.

- A1** ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα. 12:31a
B1 Καὶ ἔτι καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν ὑμῖν δείκνυμι. 12:31b
B2 Διώκετε τὴν ἀγάπην, 14:1a
A2 ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ πνευματικά, μᾶλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε. 14:1b

The love that Paul calls for and discusses in chapter 13 is an excellent way. One of the important conditions for the use of spiritual gifts is decency and order in church (14:40).

Verses 12:2-3 talk about the significance of God's guidance in relation to the use of gifts. Verses 12:4-11 describe the diversity of gifts and how God administers them in His Church. God does it according to His will. Here Paul stresses the idea of the Holy Spirit being one and inseparable. (The Church of Christ is also one and inseparable). The same theme continues in 12:28-30.

Verses 12:12-17 seem to be attached to the narration concerning administration and the use of gifts in the Church. Verses 12:14-27 clarify the previous passage 12:12-13 as they describe a human body.

Chapter 13 talks about gifts as being useless if they show no love (13:1-3), about attributes of love (13:4-7), and about temporary nature of gifts and the eternal nature of love (13:8-13).

Verses 14:1-12 discuss the meaning of spiritual gifts. To achieve the best effect, Paul compares the gift of tongues with the gift of prophecy. The following passage (14:12-19) lays out principles (conditions) for the use of the gift of tongues in the church. Verses 14:20-25 talk about the direction of use of the gift of tongues and the gift of prophesy whereas the next eight verses (14:26-33) specify the order of ministering with gifts in the church. The following two verses refer to women's behavior in church. Verses 39-40 summarize all discussed above in relation to gifts and their use in church.

3.2.1. The Holy Spirit guides the church and each believer

Taking into consideration verse 12:1, we can say that a spiritual Christian is led by the Holy Spirit. Paul writes, "no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost"

(12:3).⁵² Phrases “speaking by the Spirit of God” (literally “speaking in the Spirit of God”) and “say... by the Holy Ghost” (literally “say... in the Holy Ghost”) describe the actions of a person who dwells in the Spirit, the one who is with God. To dwell in God means to surrender to Him and His word (cf. 1 Jn. 2:5). A person guided by the Holy Spirit will never curse (anathema – deviate) Jesus Christ and, at the same time, will consider Him the Lord of his life.

An unbeliever does not know Jesus Christ whereas a carnal Christian neglects the Lord’s supervision and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Paul gives an example from their lives before they had turned to God: as unbelievers, they trusted “dumb” idols (cf. 8:4 and 10:20) which had devils behind their backs.

A spiritual approach to spiritual gifts based on trust and obedience to God’s word and the Holy Spirit will lead the church to unity, otherwise it will cause divisions.

3.2.2. The Holy Spirit grants spiritual gifts and administers them in church (12:4-11)

As we have already mentioned above, one of the reasons that leads to disunity in church is the sense of superiority. Those who possessed outward gifts of the Spirit felt superior to those who did not have them. The latter envied the former and strived to acquire those gifts.

Paul discusses the range of gifts, ministries, and operations. However, he states that these gifts should not be used at person’s will. “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all” (12:4-6). God administers the gifts, ministries, and operations in the Church, all three Persons

⁵² Lowery (1983:230) writes, “Paul therefore laid a simple test related to the person of Christ. The false teachers obviously claimed that their visions, revelations, and message (cf. 2 Cor. 12:1) came from God, but they apparently denied the humanity of Christ, as expressed by the words “Jesus be cursed”. This may have been a factor in the Corinthians’ aversion to Paul’s “message of the Cross” (1 Cor. 1:10-4:13). It may be surprising today to realize that the earliest Christological heresy (Docetism) denied Jesus’ humanity, not His deity. John had to deal with the same problem years later (1 John 4:1-3).”

of God playing their role in Church performance. The Holy Spirit administers gifts,⁵³ Jesus Christ as the Head dispenses ministries, and the Heavenly Father (God) produces gift operations.⁵⁴

The apostle points to the manner of administration. First, the gifts are given to every person (12:7). Anyone who puts his faith in Jesus has one gift at least. Second, the gifts are given for profit (12:7).⁵⁵ God will never give anything that will harm believers (Jas. 4:1-3).⁵⁶ Third, the gifts are granted in a special way (12:11) as the Holy Spirit wills (12:11,18). Apparently, God has His own plans. He knows us best and discerns what ministry might be the most effective for us.

If every Christian recognizes that the Holy Spirit is all knowing and inerrant, then, undoubtedly, his trust and gratitude to God for his own gift will contribute to church unity.

3.2.3. All gifts of the Holy Spirit are equally important (12:12-30)

Earlier Paul stated that the Holy Spirit administers gifts according to His will. Perhaps, someone was dissatisfied with his gift and wished to receive something more vibrant in his opinion. Someone probably felt superior to those who had less outstanding gifts. Paul, therefore, desired to demonstrate the significance of all gifts. He does that by describing the status in Christ of all believers and giving examples of the importance of each part of human body.

3.2.3.1. The unity in the Body of Christ (12:12-13)

12 Καθάπερ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα ἓν ἐστὶν καὶ μέλη πολλὰ ἔχει, πάντα δὲ τὰ μέλη τοῦ σώματος πολλὰ ὄντα ἓν ἐστὶν σῶμα, οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός· 13 καὶ γὰρ ἓν ἐνὶ

⁵³ “The Corinthians behaved themselves as if there was the one and only gift – the gift of tongues. Paul says, ‘Your unity comes not from sharing one single gift, it comes from possessing the Holy Spirit – the source of all gifts’” (MacDonald 2000:882).

⁵⁴ Lowery also expresses the same idea (1983:533).

⁵⁵ The one who has the gift as well as all members of the Body will benefit from it.

⁵⁶ God never gives anything that will cause pride or other negative consequences.

πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες εἰς ἓν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν, εἴτε Ἰουδαῖοι εἴτε Ἕλληνες
εἴτε δοῦλοι εἴτε ἐλεύθεροι, καὶ πάντες ἐν πνεύμα ἐποτίσθημεν.

This short Pauline narration hits several targets at once. First, Paul unfolds the essence of the Church by using a metaphor and comparing it to the Body (σῶμα) of Christ.

In the New Testament the word σῶμα is mainly used in the sense of a physical body (human, animal or plant), the physical nature of the church of believers. In one place, it refers to slaves (Rev. 18:11-13), in another (Col. 2:17) to reality (Louw & Nida:Vol.2, 240).

In the Greek language, “σῶμα” (body) is closely connected to “σάρξ” (flesh). In a dualistic tendency of Greek anthropology, both words may imply “a sense of a limited freedom in a material world” (Dunn 1998:72).

Paul deliberately differentiates these two words in his epistles.⁵⁷ He uses σῶμα in a more neutral sense, whereas σάρξ implies a negative attitude, though both meanings can overlap and extend denotation. If referred to a person, the word σῶμα may indicate the making, the character of a person, describe his/her nature, give a person the ability to distinguish himself or herself from oneself and exercise self-control (Bultmann 1951:192-199). The word σάρξ is not just a material embodiment but rather a sinful earthly nature of man (Bultmann 1951:233-235). The life in the flesh is contrasted with the life in the Spirit. Under certain conditions, a person living in the flesh can be transformed into someone living by the Spirit (Bultmann 1951:201). Unlike the flesh, the body can be changed and restored. Body denotes a being in the world, whereas flesh denotes a belonging to the world (Dunn 1998:72).

The apostle frequently uses the word “σῶμα” in his epistles. In Rom. 12:4-5, 1Cor. 10:17, Eph. 1:23 he employs it in relation to a community of believers and expresses the idea of unity. In 1 Corinthians chapter 12 he applies this term 18 times.

It is worthy to note that the image of a body was often used in an ancient world. It was applied to a city, human race, or a state (Robertson 1901:890, see also Elwell 2000: 1040-1041), expressing the idea of the community of a large number of people.

⁵⁷ Some see it as an attempt to synthesize Jewish and Greek anthropology (Dunn 1998:72).

Did Paul aim at expressing the idea of the city, the state, or the human race? Not at all. His purpose is to explain the essence or the nature of the Church as the Body of Christ.

Paul acts delicately. Lets us pay attention to the end of verse 12, “so also is Christ”. It should have been said, “so also is the Church”, instead. Is it a mistake? By no means. Paul does it deliberately. By using a metonymy (Fee 1987:603), he wants to demonstrate that Christ and the Church are one. He grasped this truth already at that time, when he was on the way to Damascus (Acts 9:4). He realized that his persecution of followers of Christ equals the persecution of the Church itself (New Bible Dictionary 1996:143-144, see also Medvedev 1998:57).

Thus, the Church is an organism, a community of believers placed in Christ and set apart from the sinful world.

Scholars contemplate on the question of body symbolism in relation to the Church. Where did Paul borrow that symbolism and what made such an impact on him? Bruce N. Fisk (Elwell 2000:1040-1041), gives a number of versions as he summarizes results of the theological research work: 1) Gnosticism; 2) antique political theories; 3) rabbinic reflections on Adam’s body; 4) Old Testament principle of corporate representation. The author expresses his opinion as following:

After all, the best is to say that Paul used various basic ideas and themes as he worked out this unique and multifaceted metaphor, which corresponded to his own ecclesiological ideas (Elwell 2000:1040-1041).

Second, Paul characterized the Body of Christ.

One of the main characteristics of the Body of Christ is unity. The word-combination τὸ σῶμα ἓν ἐστίν (“the body is one”) is a phrase, in which the numeral ἓν stands in a predicative position towards σῶμα and is linked to it by the verb ἐστίν. The numeral ἓν (sole; the only one of its kind; unique) Paul frequently puts together with σῶμα as he stresses the idea of church (body) unity. In this case, the author wants to highlight the unity of the Church in its diversity of gifts and ministries.

Thus apostle Paul expressed a living and inseparable connection of believers with God that is being manifested in continuous impact of Christ on His Church, which is filled and revived by the Holy Spirit. Christ is the Head of the Church and it receives life through Him. Along the image of the Body of Christ Christians are given a perfect example of true relations among Church members based on

relationship with Christ; as the members of one Body the Church members help, encourage, and supplement each other (Rieneker & Meyer 1999:969).

Another dictionary refers to the Church as a community with a shared destiny subjugated to the law of Christ, that is, if one part of the Body suffers the rest suffer too (Balz & Schneider 1993:324).

Paul applies the metaphor of a human body and Christ as he desires to show not the horizontal links only, expressing the essence of relations within the community, but also vertical links denoting the union with Christ (Elwell 2000:1040-1041).

Another very important characteristic is diversity. The phrase *καὶ μέλη πολλὰ ἔχει* clearly demonstrates it. In this case *καὶ* is not a connecting conjunction “and”, the meaning in which it occurs most of all, but an adversative conjunction “but” or “however” (Balz & Schneider 1991:227). The body is one; however, it has many parts.

The word *μέλη* (a body member) is also frequently used by Paul. He employs it referring to: 1) the law of sin which is in the body (Rom. 7:5, 22-23); 2) diversity of gifts (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12).

Thus, Paul does his utmost to express the idea of church unity in its diversity.

The human body is by far the most amazing organic creation of God. It is marvelously complex yet unified, with unparalleled harmony and interrelatedness. It is a unit; it cannot be subdivided into several bodies. If it is divided, the part that is cut off ceases to function and dies, and the rest of the body loses some of its functions and effectiveness. The body is immeasurably more than the sum of its parts (MacArthur 1984:310).

All parts of the body are equally important to the whole organism. Only all in unity they may compose the body. This significant idea is also expressed in the following verses. This was the very idea that Paul desired to reach the hearts of Corinthians with, to place it in their hearts filled with a spirit of individualism, common to the Greek Gentile society (Meeks 1986:50).

The word *μέλη* reflects both quantitative and qualitative sides (Medvedev 1998:59). Paul does not oppose individuality in a positive sense of the word. He does not preach uniformity. “That was the Corinthian error, to think that uniformity was a value,

or that it represented true spirituality” (Fee 1987:602). Thus, the true church unity is expressed in the diversity of its members.⁵⁸

The author communicates this thought by the means of a chiasm.

1 Cor. 12:12

A1 Καθάπερ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα ἓν ἐστίν

B1 καὶ μέλη πολλὰ ἔχει,

B2 πάντα δὲ τὰ μέλη τοῦ σώματος πολλὰ

A2 ὄντα ἓν ἐστίν σῶμα, οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός·

The first part (A1 and B1) speaks about diversity whereas the second part (A2 and B2) deals with the unity and inseparability of the Body.

The word πάντα (all without exceptions) reflect the integrity of the organism. There are many members but all of them, without exceptions, comprise one body (Bauer 1979:631-632).

The phrase οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός (also is Christ) is the pivotal point of the studied passage. Paul does not intend to say that the Church is similar to the body. He says, “The Church is the Body”.

In conclusion, we can state that Paul saw the Church of Christ as a united and inseparable organism in all its diversity.

Second, Paul points out to the Corinthians that all believers are baptized (immersed) into one Body by one Spirit (in one Spirit). What does he imply by that? There cannot be or rather must not be different factions and communities of believers. All Christians belong to one Body of Christ.

There also must not be many spirits guiding Christians.⁵⁹ There is one Spirit through whom the believers are placed into the Body of Christ and to whom they should surrender. Christ is undivided as well the Spirit. In v. 1:13 Paul puts a rhetorical

⁵⁸ “The Church is a body of gifted members which functions in unity and diversity. Nobody can exalt any ministry or gift as an exceptional sign of the manifestation of the Spirit” (Sproul 1997:140-141).

⁵⁹ As opposed to their lives prior to conversion. The words “idols” and “led” (12:2) are in plural.

question, “Is Christ divided?” The same question might be asked concerning the third Person of the Deity “Is the Holy Spirit divided?” If the Corinthians had perceived these essential truths, would they have divided, trusting human authority, would they have trusted the guidance of spirits opposing Scripture (2 Pe. 1:21)? Paul wished they had understood him.

For Paul the reception of the Spirit is the *sine qua non* of Christian life. The Spirit is what essentially distinguished the believer from nonbeliever (2:10-14); the Spirit is what especially marks the beginning of Christian life (Gal. 3:2-3); the Spirit above all is what makes a person a child of God (Rom. 8:14-17). Thus, it is natural for him to refer to their unity in the body in terms of the Spirit. Indeed, despite the considerable literature on this text suggesting otherwise, Paul’s present concern is not to delineate how an individual becomes a believer, but to explain how they, through many, are one body. The answer: the Spirit, whom all alike have received (Fee 1987:603).

Having touched on this theme, we have to pay attention to the nature of baptism into the Body of Christ. There are several interpretations of the current Scripture passage (1 Cor. 12:12-13).

The Passive Voice of the aorist verb EBAPTISTHEEMEN denotes an action that has been exercised over the community of believers. They all have been baptized (immersed; placed) by someone into the Body of Christ.

Many theologians agree that baptism is done into the Body of Christ; however, they disagree concerning the doer, whether it is Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit.⁶⁰ Some theologians affirm that baptism in the Holy Spirit described in the Gospels, in the Book of Acts and in 1 Corinthians is of the same nature. Others differentiate the baptism in 1 Cor. 12:13 from the one in the Gospels and in the Book of Acts. The first is seen as the baptism where the Holy Spirit baptizes into the Body of Christ, the second is viewed as the baptism where Christ baptizes into the Holy Spirit. The baptism described in Paul’s epistle is linked with the revival whereas the second one talks about an event that empowers the believers for ministry. This disagreement still causes contentions among churches and within them.

Before we move on to a detailed study of the passage, let us discuss the nature of the baptism. The baptism of the New Testament has ancient roots. Non-Jews who desired to “join the covenant of Abraham with God” were added to the Jewish nation

⁶⁰ Some affirm that Jesus Christ provides baptism (Pache 1995:46-47), others – the Holy Spirit does it (FLSBNT 1997:561).

through the rite of circumcision followed by immersing into water, which symbolized “the washing off – the death of the previous religious life” (Cohn-Sherbok D. & Cohn-Sherbok L. 1995:173, see also Elwell 2000:515).

The Christian rite of baptism is rooted in a Jewish practice of proselyte initiation; however, unlike in Christian baptism, children born of a Jewish mother do not partake of Judaism through circumcision: this ritual simply confirms their Jewishness. Whereas Christian baptism signifies that a person joins a voluntary community of believers and is a necessary requirement of his membership in it (Cohn-Sherbok D. & Cohn-Sherbok L. 1995:174).

In the New Testament, we come across narrations of different baptisms (Heb. 6:1-2): with water, fire, by Spirit, etc. Though they have different purposes, the essence of the baptism is the same: someone is immersed somewhere for a certain purpose with the help of somebody or something (Stott 1979:40).

The story of the baptism given by John (Mt. 3:11) shows that John was the one who baptized, the recipients were those who believed his preaching, the instrument of the baptism was water,⁶¹ the sphere of the baptism was repentance,⁶² and the goal of it was the preparation to the encounter with the Messiah.

In the New Testament, we read about seven occasions of the baptism by the Holy Spirit (in the Spirit). Let us consider their nature. We look closer at Mt. 3:11-12, Mk. 1:8, Lk. 3:16-17, Jn. 1:33, Acts 1:1:5-8, 11:16-18, 1 Cor. 12:13 with a help of the following chart.

⁶¹ Water was a symbol of cleansing (cf. 1 Pe. 3:21).

⁶² The community of those who repented is meant.

	The baptized	The provider of baptism	The instrument of baptism	The sphere of baptism	The goal of the baptism
Mt. 3:11-12	ὑμᾶς (you)	αὐτός (Christ)	Ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ	εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην Garner (community of believers)	Life instead of death
Mk. 1:8	ὑμεῖς (you)	αὐτός (Christ)	Ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ	-	-
Lk. 3:16	ὑμᾶς (you)	αὐτός (Christ)	Ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ	εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην Garner (community of believers)	Life instead of death
Jn. 1:33	-	αὐτός (Christ)	Ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ	-	-
Acts 1:1:5-8	ὑμεῖς (you)	-	Ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ	τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Ἰσραήλ The Kingdom of Israel	-
Acts 11:16- 18	ὑμεῖς (you)	-	Ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ	τὴν μετάνοιαν (repentance) ⁶³	εἰς ζωὴν ἔδωκεν (Life)
1Cor. 12:13	ἡμεῖς (we)	-	ἐν ἐνὶ Πνεύματι	σῶμα The Body of Christ	Added to the followers of Christ

⁶³ It could be referred to grace or community of believers.

The table analysis allows us to arrive at the following conclusions:

- Pronouns “you” and “we” describe believers who have already experienced baptism of the Holy Spirit and those who will believe and be baptized in future.
- Jesus Christ appears as the one who baptizes in Mt. 3:11-12, Mk. 1:8, Lk. 3:16-17, and Jn. 1:33.
- Apparently, in the baptisms described in Acts 1:1:5-8 and 11:16-18 Christ is the baptizer.⁶⁴
- The Holy Spirit is the instrument (medium) of baptism⁶⁵ in all the selected passages.
- The Gospels and the Book of Acts talk not about baptism (immersing) of the believers into the Holy Spirit and their empowering for ministry but rather about setting them apart for the kingdom (Acts 1:6) and salvation (Acts 11:18) as opposed to the wicked, destined for the unquenchable fire.
- Believers receive the power not as a result of their baptism into the Holy Spirit but because of their baptism into the Body of Christ and their dwelling in the Spirit.⁶⁶
- The doctrine of two baptisms attributed to Jesus Christ in one case and the Holy Spirit in another makes the latter insufficient.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ The parallel of John the Baptist’s baptism points to it in both cases (“John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost”).

⁶⁵ Preposition ἐν together with Dative case may convey: 1) a sphere of dwelling; 2) dependence of something; 3) condition of dwelling; 4) instrument or agency; 5) proportionality or conformity; 6) time (Weisman [1899] 1991:427). In this particular case ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ most likely refers to a means of immersing, since the sphere has already been indicated. However, it can be the sphere as well, e.g. an astronaut can be on the orbit and in a shuttle at the same time. Here a believer by the Holy Spirit and in the Spirit is immersed into the Body of Christ and, therefore, dwells in Christ and in the Holy Spirit simultaneously.

It is important to note here that the Holy Spirit cannot be the baptizing one. Grudem (1994:768) mentions the following, “To be baptized “by” someone in the New Testament is always expressed by the preposition *hypo* followed by a genitive noun. This is the way New Testament writers say that John the Baptist baptized people in the Jordan River. (Matt. 3:6; Mark 1:5; Luke 3:7) or that Jesus was baptized “by” John (Matt. 3:13; Mark 1:9), or that the Pharisees had not been baptized “by” John (Luke 7:30), or that John the Baptist told Jesus, “I need to be baptized by you” (Matt. 3:14). Therefore, if Paul had wanted to say that the Corinthians had all been baptized by the Holy Spirit he would have used *hypo* plus the genitive, not *en* plus the dative”.

⁶⁶ Perhaps, Luke deliberately used in Acts 2 the term “filled with the Holy Spirit” instead of “baptized by the Holy Spirit”.

Having summarized the results of the research concerning baptism in the Spirit, we can state that baptism is an event, in which Christ comes as a giver of baptism, the Holy Spirit is the medium of baptism whereas the sphere of baptism is the Church, the community of believers destined for salvation.⁶⁸ All believers join the Church. Believers are initially filled with the Holy Spirit at the moment of their spiritual baptism. They should make a certain effort in order to reach unity and be enabled for witnessing (Phil. 2:2; Eph. 5:18).

Is it correct to identify or link the baptism in the Spirit with baptism with water,⁶⁹ as some Christian tend to do? Apparently, not.

- (1) John contrasts baptism with water to baptism in Spirit (Mt. 3:11; Lk. 3:16-17).
- (2) The text in 1 Cor. 12:13 points out that the medium (instrument) of baptism is not water but the Holy Spirit.
- (3) The word "baptism" does not always imply immersing into water (Mk. 10:38; Lk. 12:50; Acts 1:5).
- (4) Earlier (12:4-11) Paul discussed not baptism with water, but the Holy Spirit who is a foundation for unity (Fee 1987:604).

Bruce expressed the connection between these two types of baptism as follows:

Faith-union with Christ brought his people into membership of the Spirit-baptized community, procuring for them the benefits of the once-for-all outpouring of the Spirit at dawn of the new age, while baptism in water was retained as the outward and visible sign of their incorporation "into Christ" (cf. Gal. 3:27). And as it was in one Spirit that they were all baptized, therefore it was into one body that they were all baptized (Carson 1987:43).

⁶⁷ According to their position in Christ, Christians must be in unity, which was not true in reality. Paul talks about baptism of the Holy Spirit of all believers, both spiritual and carnal.

⁶⁸ Preposition εἰς preceding εἰς ἐν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν denotes an inside movement from outside. "Perhaps, apostle Paul, having used this preposition, wanted to show how Jesus Christ takes people of different nationalities and social status out of the sinful world and places them into a new sphere, new relationships with other people, and a new union with Christ (Medvedev 1998:62).

⁶⁹ Archimandrite Ambrose writes, "As a red thread in the Holy Scriptures there is an idea that human sins are washed off by the Holy Baptism, in which a man receives spiritual revival" (Ambrose (Yurasov) 1994:55). Cyril of Jerusalem also talks about revival in baptism with water (Archbishop Sergey (Stragorodsky) 1991:171).

We could have discussed other questions such as “whether this baptism brings about this body, or incorporates people into a body that is already preexistent” or “whether baptism in the Spirit follows conversion” (Carson 1987:44-45). These aspects, however, are not directly related to the topic of unity so we will not discuss them here.

The phrase “have been all made to drink into one Spirit” in 1 Cor. 12:13 is of particular interest. There are several interpretations of this phrase. Calvin, Luther, Cüsemann, and Conzelmann related it to the Lord’s Supper. Some others link it to a spiritual experience that follows rebirth (baptism of the Holy Spirit) (Fee 1987:604).

We doubt that Paul desired to portray participation of the baptized in the Lord’s Supper since in Eucharist the participants partake of wine, which embodies the blood of Christ, not the Holy Spirit (Medvedev 1998:64). It is confirmed by a grammatical form of the verb EPOTISTHEEMEN (passive aorist), which indicates the completion of an action, which is not repeated (Fee 1987:604).

Fee considers it a Semitic parallelism, where both phrases “baptized in the Spirit” and “have been all made to drink into one Spirit” imply the same meaning by supplementing each other (ibid.). A believer dwells in the Spirit and the Holy Spirit dwells in him simultaneously (cf. Jn. 7:37-39; 14:21-23; 1 Jn. 2:5).

3.2.3.2. The unity in a human body (12:14-30)

Whereas 1 Cor. 12:12-13 points the Corinthians to what makes them one (their status in one inseparable body of Christ and “drinking from one Spirit”) the following passage (12:14-30) conveys the idea of true unity and the ways of reaching it. Here Paul gives an example of a human body. Metonymy underlines Paul’s thought.

No sane person will ever say that he does not need some part of his body. He will never throw out not even one of them. He will never ever think of it. On the contrary, like the author of psalms, he may say, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Ps. 139:14).

The first thing to consider is, “For the body is not one member, but many” (12:14). What is Paul’s purpose in saying so? Apparently, he desires that those who felt superior because of their gifts would give up their incorrect views. Other people also possess no less important gifts that are equally needed as any other part of a human body. The

apostle addresses those who were depressed because they did not have exceptional gifts in their point of view. He desires to show them that their gifts are as significant to the body as the rest of them. "If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?" (12:14). The body cannot consist of a body alone (12:17,19). It is nonsense!

Second, the author reminds his readers that God gives the gifts according to His will. Verse 12:18 urges us to think logically. Can we blame God for granting another person a role in the Body different from the one we wanted to play? Did God make a mistake by giving her an unattractive gift? Is anybody able to resist God's will? No way.

Third, a person who desires to have exceptional gifts frequently acts according to the flesh, not to the Spirit. The gifts, which seem for him to be more feeble, are indispensable in God's eyes (12:22). Often a person's understanding of her role in the body is wrong.

Perhaps some neglected church members thought they were not worthy of attention. The apostle states the opposite. On the contrary, the members of the body, which were thought to be less honorable, have to be given more abundant honor (12:23-24). On the other hand, those who felt superior were motivated by these words to honor the rest of the church. Thus, Paul addresses both sides encouraging them to live in unity and take care of each other (12:25).

Fourth, the author aims at showing his readers their interdependence (26-27). If one member is sick, the whole body is in pain, and vice versa, a healthy condition of one member produces joy in others.⁷⁰ One cannot exist without the other. Otherwise, they are dead parts.

The end of the chapter (12:28-30) summarizes Paul's thoughts. God has granted a particular ministry and a gift to every member of the Body of Christ. Obviously, all believers cannot share the same gift.

⁷⁰ The Discipleship Course (Neighbour & McElrat 1993:26) gives the following example, "I am sorry for my bad writing, my foot hurts". Indeed, the pain in a limb produces suffering of the whole body.

3.2.4. The use of the gifts in the church (12:31-14:40)

3.2.4.1. Attitude towards the gifts

We have stated earlier that the administration of spiritual gifts belongs to the Holy Spirit. How should the members of the Body of Christ treat these gifts?

Undoubtedly, each received gift must be treated thankfully (see Eph. 5:16,18; Rom. 12:1-2), knowing that God does not make mistakes and that all things work together for good (Rom. 8:28). How do we treat gifts, which we desire to possess but have not received them yet? It is no secret, believers hold different views on the subject. Some say that *χαρίσματα* is a gift and it should not be asked from God: He knows what His children need. Others believe that we may boldly ask it from God. Why so many opinions that cause divisions in churches and among churches? The problem is that there are many interpretations of a few particular passages of Scripture.

Let us look at 1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1 and 14:39 first. The key word here is *ζηλοντε* (Imper., Act.). In a positive sense it means 1) to strive, to desire, to exert oneself earnestly (Bauer 1979:338) and 2) to set one's heart on, to have deep concern for (Louw & Nida). Paul encourages the Corinthians to seek spiritual gifts. What does it mean? Bengel provides a short clear answer, "Believers may dream of a gift; the Spirit administers gifts as He wishes" (Cleon L. Rogers, Jr. & Cleon L. Rogers III 2001:601).⁷¹

3.2.4.2. The purpose of gifts and ministries

Paul, in the first place, points out that ministries and gifts are given by Christ and the Holy Spirit so that believers take care one for another (12:25). Ministries and gifts are not a reward, but God's grace. They are not given to believers so that they might feel superior to other members of the Body or count on more attention and honor if they possess outward gifts of the Spirit. God grants His gifts so that Christians might minister with them to each other (cf. 1 Pe. 4:10). Metonymy, employed by Paul, shows this truth in the best way possible. Not a single part of a human body ever thought that it was

⁷¹ Cf. Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane, "And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt (Mt. 26:39).

better than others were. It never considered whether the rest of parts were needed at all. Each member needs others and cannot afford being independent. It is dead without other members. “In a healthy human body different parts cooperate with each other and even partly substitute one for another in case of crisis” (Wiersbe 1990:130).⁷² Some interior organs are much more vital. Their dysfunction inevitably leads to death,⁷³ while “a man who lost his eye, arm, or leg can still live” (Boor 1989:221). Understanding of the significance of each member of the Body “was missing in Corinth where powerful members acted regardless of everything and paraded their ‘freedom’ whereas particularly gifted lived by their self-esteem. Now the church needed to go back to love that builds up” (Boor 1989:222).

Mutual care prevents *divisions in the body*. One gives another whatever he needs and receives such help back that only another member is able to provide. That is how it should work in Church. An exaggerated attention towards one gift of the Spirit will result in conflict and contentions (MacDonald 2000:885).

Second, a Christian is called to praise God through his ministries and gifts. Paul writes, “ἐκάστῳ δὲ δίδεται ἡ φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον” (1 Cor. 12:7). The main meaning of the word φανέρωσις (bringing to light, disclosure) is to make something known, clear, and obvious (MacArthur 1993:384). For example, the word φανερωθῆ Jesus uses to demonstrate that nothing can be concealed; at some time it will be revealed. In 2 Tim. 1:10 the word φανερωθεῖσαν is used as “revealed” grace (made manifest – KJV; has now been revealed – NIV). The word φανερώσει Paul employs in 1 Cor. 4:5, when he talks about disclosure of the counsels of the hearts (make manifest – KJV; will expose – NIV) by God as well as in 2 Cor. 4:2, when he speaks about revelation of truth to men (by manifestation – KJV; by setting forth – NIV). In 1 Cor. 12:7 the apostle also uses this word to demonstrate the task of spiritual

⁷² An ordinary old woman with the gift of prayer might be more important than an energetic man known for his activities (Boor 1989:221).

⁷³ That is why these organs are the most protected by the skeleton and other parts of the body (MacArthur 1993:420).

gifts: “do it so that because of them the Holy Spirit becomes known, clear, and obvious in the Church and worldwide” (MacArthur 1993:384-385).⁷⁴

Third, gifts are designed to make the Gospel accessible for people (1 Cor. 2:5). Due to this gift alone, which assisted Paul in ministry (Rom. 15:16), the apostle could have reached many nations with the Good News.

3.2.4.3. Administration and the Use of Gifts in the Church

Paul draws the attention of the Corinthians to a number of important truths.

First, spiritual gifts are given to every believer, not chosen members only (ἐκάστῳ). “There are no Christians left without some kind of ministry” (MacDonald 2000:882). History demonstrates numerous examples when church authorities took all responsibilities upon themselves, and, as a result, the gifts of church members were left unclaimed (Boor 1989:213). In such situations, the Church as the Body of Christ could not function normally. It became disproportional. The leaders in charge committed themselves to ministries they actually could not carry out since they lacked necessary gifts. Laymen, on the contrary, became spiritually weak since they had no opportunities to practice their gifts.

Second, Christians are provided with gifts and ministries for their benefit. The word συμφέρον (1 Cor. 12:7) consists of two words: σὺν and φέρω. The first one, as it has been mentioned above, generates the meaning of accompaniment, correlation, and participation in compound words. The second is used as “bring, carry, and produce”. Literally, it means, “bring together”. This word is also used in the meaning of “help, produce profit”. Thus, we can say that gifts and ministries are given to the community for their mutual benefit.⁷⁵

Third, gifts and ministries are distributed among Christians as the Holy Spirit wills (βούλεται) (12:11,18). The Holy Spirit has His own plans and intentions concerning each member of the Body. That is why every believer must gratefully

⁷⁴ The same is applicable to praising of Christ and God the Father (1 Cor. 10:31).

⁷⁵ Parts of a human body fulfill one task: they contribute to the purpose of the whole body and are of benefit to each other.

receive any gift from God since he knows that all things work together for good (Rom. 8:28).

3.2.4.4. The most important conditions for the use of gifts

(1) Love is one of the most important conditions for the use of gifts and carrying out of entrusted ministries.⁷⁶ The passage 12:31-14:1 clearly demonstrates this while a chiasm⁷⁷ highlights this truth.

Paul employs a number of practical examples in order to show the necessity of love by applying those examples also to himself. It implies that all Christians including the apostles need love not just individual believers in Corinth. If a Christian speaks with the tongues of men and of angels, and has not love, he becomes as an icy cold metal that freezes one's body and soul. If a Christian speaks beautifully, and has no love, he does not draw people to himself, he pushes them away. People consider him a hypocrite. Though a Christian has the gift of prophecy from God, and understands all mysteries, and though he has all faith, so that he could remove mountains, but has no love, he and his ministry are nothing. If a Christian is ready to sacrifice his goods and give his body to be burned, and has not love, he will not benefit from it. On the contrary, he will be seen as an irrational fanatic.

Later in the chapter (12:4-7) Paul portrays a true love which is expressed through deeds not words, such love that the Corinthians lacked.

Hodge pointed out that the Corinthians were impatient, unsatisfied, envious, arrogant, selfish, untactful, indifferent towards feelings and interests of others, suspicious, susceptible, and quick to judge. That is why the apostle contrasts their condition with signs of true love (MacDonald 2000:888).

Love *suffers long*. The word μακροθυμει is most frequently used in the New Testament to denote delayed reaction to some actions. In Rom. 9:22, Paul applied it to

⁷⁶ "... Paul had taught... that love was of greater value than any gift" (Hodge 1950:278). Gaffin (1998:586) expresses the same thought.

⁷⁷ It has already been mentioned above.

demonstrate God's patience towards sinners destined to perish. Love is slow to react to evil conduct; it endures mocking and superciliousness. Love is *kind*. It shows love to others without bias. Love *envies not*.⁷⁸ It is not jealous of somebody else's success, ministry, gifts, and conditions; "it feels joy when others are praised and exalted" (MacDonald 2000:888). Love *boasts not*, it is *not puffed up*. It does exalt itself but ascribes all achievements to God not itself. Love *does not behave itself unseemly* (οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ). It is tactful, polite, and considerate. Love *seeks not its own*. Love does not seek profit; it desires to be caring and helpful to others. It is happy that others who possess outward gifts of the Spirit may serve the Lord with them. It understands that each member of the Body of Christ contributes to community life and praises his Savior. Love is *not easily provoked*. It is ready to endure scorns and insults. Love *thinks no evil*. It is not suspicious of others, it does not take revenge, and does not desire to do harm to those who are more successful. Love *rejoices not in iniquity but rejoices in the truth*. It does not enjoy somebody else's failures as most competitors do. Love is sympathetic. Being a part of community, love rejoices at any success. Love *bears all things*. It is quick to forgive and never puts flaws of others on display. Love *believes all things* and attempts to interpret deeds and actions in a positive light. Love *hopes all things*. It hopes that God will mold every person and accomplish His goals. Love *endures all things*. It endures mocking, arrogance, and enjoys everything the Lord has given it.

The passage from 1 Cor. 13:1-13 is obviously directed against such "exaltation" when striving for more effective gifts (prophecy, glossalalia, and knowledge) caused envy, arrogance, irritation, and other similar sins. Then the most important thing – love – was lost (Dunn 1997:229-230).

(2) The second necessary requirement for the ministry and the use of gifts is the benefit for each member and the Body of Christ as a whole.⁷⁹ Paul reveals this truth as he compares the gift of tongues with the gift of prophecy.

⁷⁸ "... in the two remaining passages at 1 Cor. 13:4 and Jas. 4:2 we may deduce from the context that ζηλοῦν is not so much directed towards the edification of the community but is rather an uncontrolled outburst. Thus in 1 Cor. 13:4 it has the general sense of "to envy," "to be passionate",..." (Kittel 1964:888).

⁷⁹ Earlier we have discussed the meaning of the word "συμφέρον". "For Paul the charismatic experience is characterized not only by exaltation and the depth of revelation (cf. 2 Cor. 12:2-4), but explicable words, which are uttered by a

The gift of tongues in Corinth that some were proud of and others longed to acquire was useless to the Church unless the tongues are interpreted. In this case the gift should be exercised in “one’s prayer room not in church” (Yuncaala 1996:31). Even though, Paul recommends an owner of the gift to ask also for the gift of interpretation in order to bear fruit both for the spirit and the mind (1 Cor. 14:14-15). A chiasm in verses 12-17 allows us to arrive at this conclusion.

- A1.** οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, ἐπεὶ ζηλωταὶ ἐστε πνευμάτων, πρὸς τὴν οἰκοδομὴν
τῆς ἐκκλησίας ζητεῖτε ἵνα περισσεύητε 12
- B1.** διὸ ὁ λαλῶν γλώσση προσευχέσθω ἵνα διερμηνεύη 13
- C1.** ἐὰν γὰρ προσεύχωμαι γλώσση, τὸ πνεῦμά μου προσεύχεται,
ὁ δὲ νοῦς μου ἄκαρπός ἐστιν 14
- C2.** τί οὖν ἐστὶν προσεύξομαι τῷ πνεύματι, προσεύξομαι δὲ
καὶ τῷ νοῖ· ψαλῶ τῷ πνεύματι, ψαλῶ δὲ καὶ τῷ νοῖ 15
- B2.** ἐπεὶ ἐὰν εὐλογῆς ἐν πνεύματι, ὁ ἀναπληρῶν τὸν τόπον τοῦ
ιδιώτου πῶς ἐρεῖ τὸ Ἄμην ἐπὶ τῇ σῇ εὐχαριστίᾳ
ἐπειδὴ τί λέγεις οὐκ οἶδεν· 16
- A2.** σὺ μὲν γὰρ καλῶς εὐχαριστεῖς ἀλλ’ ὁ ἕτερος οὐκ οἰκοδομεῖται 17

Verses 12-13, 16-17 speak about the edification of the church. Verses 14-15 urge those who possess the gift of tongues to pray for the gift of interpretation so that the whole church would be edified, not their mind only.⁸⁰

Verse 13 confirms our conclusion: a person praying in an unknown tongue should ask for the gift of interpretation of his own prayer.⁸¹ Apparently, it is important not only for edifying one’s mind but probably for testing whether it was from God or not.⁸²

believer to edify and exhort one another (1 Cor. 14:3-5, 16-19, 24-25)... Whatever does not benefit others does no good to the church” (Dunn 1997:230).

⁸⁰ There are also other interpretations of this passage, for instance some people say, that there is no need to interpret the prayer in tongues so that the Devil would not understand it.

⁸¹ KJV and NIV give exactly the same translation.

⁸² Apparently, there were true and false gifts in Corinth. We will discuss it later.

The gift of prophecy is most important for edification, exhortation, and comfort both for the whole church and individuals (1 Cor. 14:2-3). Paul urges the Corinthians to seek this kind of gift. One needs to notice, that any gift used for edification of the church is useful (14:26).

(3) The third important condition is the necessity of God's guidance. Paul writes in 14:22, "ὥστε αἱ γλῶσσαι εἰς σημεῖόν εἰσιν οὐ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀπίστοις, ἡ δὲ προφητεία οὐ τοῖς ἀπίστοις ἀλλὰ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν". Whom are believers called to minister to with their gifts? Paul says that an unknown tongue is a sign for unbelievers. What does the word "sign" (σημεῖόν) mean? Who are considered unbelievers? There are several interpretations (Hodge 1950:294-296): (1) Some employ the word σημεῖόν as *mark* or *proof* like in 2 Cor. 12:12 and conclude that "Tongues are a proof that those among whom they are used are not believers, but unbelievers"⁸³; (2) Others use the word σημεῖόν in the meaning of *prodigy* or *wonder* and believe that, "Tongues are a wonder designed not for the benefit of believers, but for unbelievers"⁸⁴; (3) The third use the word σημεῖόν as a sign of judgment on those who rejected faith in their stubbornness⁸⁵; (4) The fourth think that σημεῖόν must signify some indication to divine presence⁸⁶, and become a sign for those who are disobedient.

It is hard to agree to the first two interpretations since they contradict the context. As for the fourth interpretation, it is difficult to conform to Hodge's opinion that the tongue as a sign must be distinguished from the tongue as a gift. The context of chapters 12-14 does not allow us to arrive at a similar conclusion. Paul keeps talking about gifts

⁸³ In this case σημεῖόν is a sign *of*, but not *to* or *for*.

⁸⁴ However, such interpretation of the given verse contradicts 14:24.

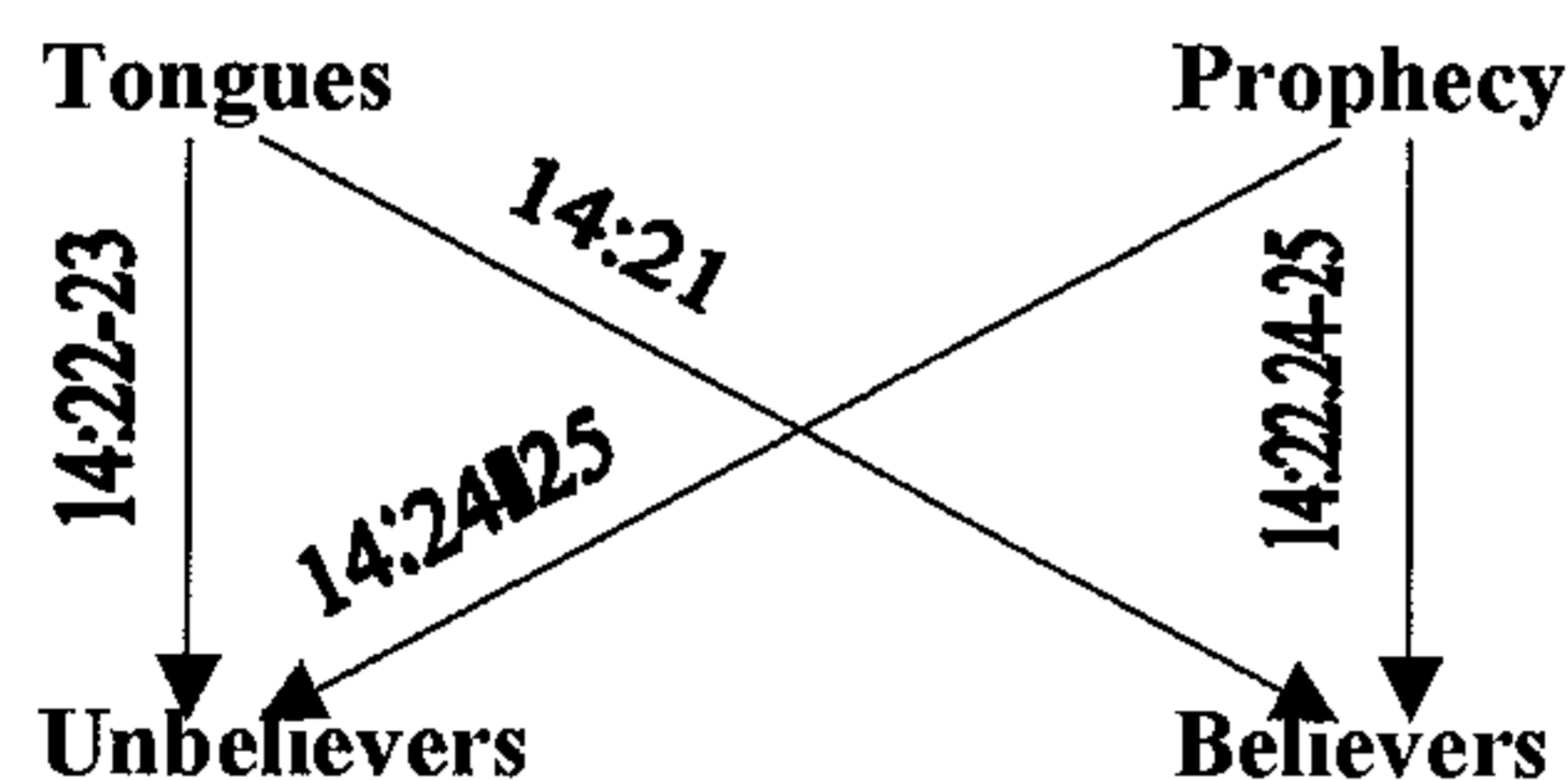
⁸⁵ MacArthur, as he studies 14:20-25 and Is. 28:9-11, assumes that the gift of tongues was meant for Israel as a sign of condemnation for unbelief and rejection of Christ (MacArthur 1993:502). Wiersbe holds to the same opinion (Wiersbe 1990:142). MacDonald goes further. He considers as unbelievers not only Israel, but all people, who rejected the Word of God and closed their hearts for the truth (MacDonald 2000:893). FSLBNT gives a similar interpretation (1997:566).

⁸⁶ Hodge holds the same opinion (1950:296). He points out that one must not mix the phenomenon of signs and the gift of tongues. He gives an example of Israelites, "When Hebrews were disobedient God sent foreigners among them".

and a sudden shift from the term “gift” to the term “sign” is barely possible. Most likely, the gift of tongues is a sign in particular cases.

As for unbelievers, it seems that not only Israelites are meant, who rejected Christ, but also disobedient church members. The context and Paul’s reference to a particular historical example from the Old Testament (Is. 28:9-11; Deut. 28:49) point to that. Israel’s disobedience led to captivity and the dwelling among people speaking in a foreign language. Community prayers in other tongues without interpretation break the order. It condemns believers whose conduct demonstrates that they have departed from truth.

Paul employs a very interesting literary device, which helps him to show that believers who break God’s will, in essence, become unbelievers, whereas unbelievers, when they turn to God, become believers. This truth grows to be more clear when the author says that prophecy is a sign for believers. However, prophecy caused unbelievers to turn to God (14:24-25). Yet, at the same time, when a believer ignores the prophecy, God rebukes him in an unknown tongue. This truth can be depicted as follows.



As we analyze the material given above, we can arrive at the conclusion that the Holy Spirit introduces a special means of communication with people, both believers and unbelievers. If believers keep the order established by God, then speaking and praying in tongues, provided there is interpretation present, are normal. In this case, both the church is edified and unbelievers (Jews), present at worship service, are rebuked. If church members do not keep God’s rules, then speaking and praying in tongues without interpretation condemns believers. They should change something in their lives. Meanwhile, unbelievers, attending worship services, are not edified and tempted.

The correct reaction of believers and church leadership to God’s actions, undoubtedly, will contribute to church unity.

(4) Another important condition for the use of gifts is the necessity of keeping a specified order for ministering with gifts set by God (14:26-38). First, all gifts must

work for the edification of the church. «How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying» (14:26). At first glance, this verse speaks more about the purpose of gifts. Nonetheless, a more detailed analysis helps us to see that he urges every church member, before he or she has begun to minister in the church, to think whether it edifies and builds up the whole church. The word οἰκοδομήν (up building, strengthening, encouragement, building, structure) always stresses the idea of making and building up a community, rather than its destruction. Church leaders are fully responsible for believers' participation in worship service.

Second, the leaders should not overload worship services with excessive sermons, speaking in tongues (provided there is an interpreter); it must be structured in order to avoid confusion. Simultaneous prophesying and speaking in tongues are prohibited (14:27,30-31). "Tongues were not to be exercised unless an interpreter was present. And at the most only three were to participate" (Pfeiffer & Harrison, WBC 1990:1254). The negligence of set rules demonstrates the guidance of some other spirit, not the Spirit of God (14:32). Keeping God's rules, on the contrary, leads to peace and unity (14:33).

Third, the prophecies must be judged and tested (14:29). The verb διακρινέτωσαν (imper.; pres.) Paul uses in another grammatical form in 1 Cor. 4:7, when he speaks about God who distinguishes between believers and other people, and in Rom. 14:23, where he talks about a damned person, acting not according to faith. The process of discernment (πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες) was necessary to evaluate those prophecies. Compatibility of the prophecies with the apostolic tradition was an important criterion for their validity.

Dunn, as he speaks about criteria for validity, writes the following (1997:229):

One of the criteria was kerygmatic traditions and legends about Jesus, which Paul communicated to converts, when they joined the church: those traditions in planted churches were some sort of constitution. These are the traditions Paul keeps referring to in his First Epistle to the Corinthians in order to solve debatable issues concerning "exalted" believers in Corinth (see especially 1 Cor. 9:14, 11:23, 12:3, 15:3)... To Paul only such religious experience, which was consistent with foundational traditions, came from the Spirit. The Spirit of Christ must be in agreement with the Law of Christ (1 Cor. 9:21, Gal. 6:2).

Fourth, women were not allowed to speak in church.⁸⁷ There are a number of interpretations concerning this verse. Some scholars argue that Paul prohibited women from “chatting”, not teaching in church. MacDonald (2000:895) writes the following:

It is often claimed that in this verse Paul prohibited women from chatting and gossiping during worship service. However, this interpretation is incorrect. The word translated here as «speak» (λαλεῖν), had no meaning of «to chat» in Greek koine. The same word is applied to God in verse 21 of the given chapter and Heb. 1:1. It means, «speak authoritatively».

Other theologians, probably taking into consideration 1 Cor. 11:5, believe that women are not allowed to teach in church, except for special occasions when they are «under an extraordinary impulse of the Spirit» (see Schoenhals, JWC 1990:520). Verses 34-35 and the context dispute such interpretation. We may agree with MacArthur that women are not permitted to prophesy⁸⁸ in church, nor in other places. Women, says MacArthur, are inevitably deluded when they usurp men’s role (MacArthur 1993:515).⁸⁹ Paul suggested such order in others places beside Corinth. It was established in other churches (14:33,36) and was based not on apostle’s words but God’s commandments (14:37).

Verses 14:39-40 conclude the theme of gifts. Paul did not prohibit the Corinthians from speaking in tongues since he also had this gift (14:18). However, once again, he reminds of the advantages of prophesying and the necessity of keeping order in service “Let all things be done decently and in order”.

As we conclude the theme of spiritual gifts, let us consider briefly the time of their operation and how they relate to us.⁹⁰ These questions, which Paul touched on in his epistle, probably were not a serious problem for the Corinthians and the apostle just mentioned them casually.

⁸⁷ In all important manuscripts such as ϕ ⁴⁶ \aleph A B Ψ 0150 0243 6 33 81 vs. 34-35 stand in this position, in some others, such as D F G, they follow 14:40.

⁸⁸ That is what the context says.

⁸⁹ Law trespassing is meant here (Gen. 3:16 and 1 Tim. 2:11-12).

⁹⁰ At present time this theme is a subject of theological debates. White interferes in one of the discussions between Gaffin and Grudem trying to restore the truth (White 1992:180-181). He comes to the conclusion that this passage (13:10) can not be a basis for solving this argument.

However, contemporary Christians find these questions challenging. How long should particular gifts operate in the Church? The passage from 1 Cor. 13:8-10 provides us with an answer.

8 Ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε πίπτει· εἴτε δὲ προφητεῖαι, καταργηθήσονται· εἴτε γλῶσσαι, παύσονται· εἴτε γνώσις, καταργηθήσεται 9 ἐκ μέρους γὰρ γινώσκομεν καὶ ἐκ μέρους προφητεύομεν· 10 ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον, τὸ ἐκ μέρους καταργηθήσεται 11 ὅτε ἤμην νήπιος, ἐλάλουν ὡς ἡπίος, ἐφρόνουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐλογιζόμην ὡς νήπιος· ὅτε γέγονα ἀνὴρ, κατήργηκα τὰ τοῦ νηπίου 12 λέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον· ἄρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μέρους, τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθη

Gifts will cease operating (καταργηθήσεται)⁹¹, when the perfect (τέλειον) comes. Nowadays there exist numerous interpretation of the word τέλειον. Some believe that τέλειον is the time of the completion of the New Testament; others think it is the time of maturity; the third speak about the rapture of the Church; the fourth, like G. Fee, for example, suppose it is the Second coming of Christ (Fee 1987:646). MacArthur states that τέλειον is none of the mentioned above; it pertains to eternity (MacArthur 1993:482). We may agree with the three last interpretations to some extent: at some moment in time, all people of God will see Christ (13:12a).⁹² However, most likely, in this case the passage speaks about a personal encounter of every believer with Christ, since in verse 13:12b Paul talks about himself. Such interpretation is consistent with the context: it is important to keep in mind that the Corinthians longed to possess outward gifts of the Spirit. After believers have met Christ, they will not need them.

The interpretation of the phrase εἴτε γλῶσσαι, παύσονται is somewhat difficult. Some believe, taking the Middle Voice of the verb παύσονται into consideration, that the gift of tongues will cease operation in some other way unlike the gifts of knowledge and prophecy. MacArthur says that the gift of tongues will disappear at a particular period.⁹³ Others dispute this point of view. Negrov (1995:66-67) writes,

It should not be understood, therefore, that Paul, by using the middle voice here, characterizes the cessation of tongues in a different way than he does the

⁹¹ The verb καταργηθήσεται in Passive Voice indicates that these gifts will not cease by themselves, someone will bring them to an end.

⁹² The first two contradict v. 12.

⁹³ He links this period to the fall of Jerusalem and appearance of the New Testament books (MacArthur 1993:472-477).

cessation of both the gift of prophecy and the gift of knowledge... Paul's motive here is not to distinguish one gift from another in regard to their cessation but simply to claim, "Love never fails, but the practice of *all* gifts will one day cease".

Who is right then? All interpretations hold some truth. Both groups are correct: those, who direct their attention to the Middle Voice of the verb *παύσονται*, and those, who say that Paul had no intention to talk about the upcoming cessation of tongues as his main goal was to show superiority of love over the gifts. Most likely, Paul wanted to say that at the moment of personal encounter with God, every believer will receive a new knowledge and a new revelation from the Lord⁹⁴ and the gift of tongues will cease as unnecessary.⁹⁵ As we conclude the theme of spiritual gifts, we should say that spirituality is not about possession of gifts⁹⁶; it is, in essence, an understanding of one's purpose and gratitude to God for the gifts and their appropriate use.

⁹⁴ The agent implied by the passive voice of the verbs *καταργηθῶσονται* and *καταργηθήσεται*.

⁹⁵ Since its function as a sign of condemnation, as a means of edification, and as a testimony will become obsolete.

⁹⁶ Fee observes: "The clue to this emphasis lies with the Corinthians' understanding of tongues as evidence of their spirituality" (Fee 1987:642).

4. Conclusion

In this research paper we dealt with the topic of “The Holy Spirit and the church in 1 Corinthians: The role of the Holy Spirit in building up church unity”.

In the beginning, we highlighted the relevance of the theme not only at the time of the epistle’s writing, but also at later periods up to the present day. We have pointed out that the role of the Holy Spirit in building up church unity has received little attention by researches of the New Testament, including 1 Corinthians. Therefore, we embarked on an exegetical study of several passages of the epistle in order to expose the reasons for divisions and find ways Paul suggest to take to restore unity in the Corinthian church.

We must note here that the task of the current research was not to execute a detailed analysis of all reasons that led to schism. Many reasons were just briefly mentioned. In our research, we focused mainly on those reasons that could be removed, according to the author, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

As in any other exegetical research, we included an introduction to the epistle. We have showed that, despite some doubts concerning the integrity of the epistle expressed by a number of scholars, Pauline authorship is commonly recognized. We have demonstrated that the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written in 57 A.D. from Ephesus. In the section “Pauline Communication and Correspondence with the Corinthians” we have explained that the First Epistle to the Corinthians is in fact the second of the four known epistles of Paul.

The author of the epistle had the following goals:

- to call the church to unity;
- to explain the contents of the previous letter;
- to answer urgent questions asked by the Corinthians;
- to present the correct understanding of Christian freedom and dispute the rising Gnostic ideas;
- to correct the wrong eschatological view of the Corinthians;
- to communicate God’s principle of reciprocal ministry of gifts and point to the importance of the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We have also looked at the historical background as we described the political status of Corinth, its economical and moral conditions as well as cultural and religious life. We

have observed that different levels of life and social status, within the Christian community in particular, their pagan past, religious and philosophical influences, undoubtedly, made a great impact on the spiritual condition of believers.

Further, we have mainly focused on exposing reasons, which led to contentions, and finding ways to restore unity.

One of the reasons that caused divisions was a misunderstanding of baptism with water. Apparently, community members connected baptism with the one who baptized them. Paul disputes this incorrect view and points out that not the provider is important but the One in Whose name baptism is given since all baptized belong to Him. Another reason that led to disunity was a misunderstanding of the Cross of Christ. To Jews the Cross of Christ was a stumbling block, to Greeks it was foolishness. This particular issue had an effect on the Corinthians. Philosophy eclipsed the Gospel. Longing for wisdom, even hidden wisdom, feelings of superiority, and self-exaltation (1 Cor. 1:31) were the problems that caused disunity. Paul has the goal to demonstrate hollowness of philosophy and affirm the supremacy of the Cross. First, he points to eternal heritage that believers receive through Christ's sacrifice: wisdom of God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1:30). Is it possible for a human to acquire all these treasures without knowing Christ and His sacrifice? The message of Christ crucified was the foundation of faith in Corinth. It was not some philosophy or Paul's eloquence but the power of God that had brought the Corinthians to faith (2:4-5).⁹⁷ In verses 2:1-5 Paul speaks about the source of salvation, which is not in philosophy but in the Good News and the One who made this salvation accessible – the Holy Spirit. The Gospel becomes understandable through the Holy Spirit (Pinnock 1993:496). Paul longed to say that the way to salvation was opened by the Holy Spirit, not through philosophy; not human wisdom produces true and undivided knowledge of God but the Holy Spirit himself. There is no need to strive for human wisdom. It is important to trust the Holy Spirit. Second, Paul shows that without an understanding of Christ's sacrifice, spiritual growth and, consequently, spiritual unity is impossible. The Holy Spirit, not the hidden wisdom (2:6-16), reveals spiritual truths. Only through rebirth by the Holy Spirit

⁹⁷ The research paper shows the influence of δύνάμις of God on building up faith and spiritual growth of Christians.

and with His help, one can perceive these truths.⁹⁸ If the Corinthians had understood those vital truths, there would be one less reason for divisions.

The third reason for divisions was the weak spiritual condition of believers (3:1-3). A comparative analysis of 1 Cor. 2-3 and Heb. 5:11-6:6 showed that this problem was the result of an misunderstanding of the Cross of Christ. It is important to comprehend that spiritual immaturity always leads to disunity.

The fourth reason was a misunderstanding of their purpose on earth. The Corinthians sought earthly privileges and honors while they were called to bear the cross (4:8-13).

The fifth reason for divisions were different views on marital relationships and different requirements for outward appearance (11:3-19).⁹⁹

The sixth reason was the diverse economic and social status of believers.

Yet, another reason was an incorrect view of spirituality and spiritual gifts (ch. 12-14). Here Paul intended to tell the Corinthians the following:

- (1) They are immersed in one Body by the Holy Spirit. In reality, they are a whole organism, where divisions are simply impossible. Here the apostle points to unity and inseparability both of Christ and the Holy Spirit. When they are in Christ and in one Spirit contentions are impossible;
- (2) As they are saved through faith in Christ's sacrifice and by the Holy Spirit, they must trust God's guidance, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in particular (12:2-3);
- (3) Every person receives not the gift he likes but the one God gives him as He wills (12:7,11);
- (4) Not all believers share one gift since the Body consists of many members;
- (5) Gifts are administered by the Holy Spirit for one's benefit: for praising God and ministering to one another;
- (6) All spiritual gifts are equally important, some minor gifts may turn out to be the most needed;
- (7) All members of the Body are called to contribute to community life;

⁹⁸ "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God" (2:14).

⁹⁹ We have briefly mentioned this subject since Paul does not say directly what is the role of the Holy Spirit in achieving unity in this case.

- (8) The ministry is effective if gifts operate properly. Among requirements for gift operation Paul highlights love, mutual benefit, understanding of gifts' purpose, submission to order set in the church by the Holy Spirit.

Thus, Paul's desire is to demonstrate to the Corinthians that true spirituality consists not of human wisdom and outstanding gifts, but of the comprehension of Christ's sacrifice, their trust to the Holy Spirit, gratitude for the received gifts, and obedience through understanding community goals. Thus, appreciation of true spirituality by the Corinthians, their desire to praise God, to fulfill His will, and to minister to each other would inevitably bring the church to unity.

We have also touched on some issues that are still debatable in modern churches.

- (1) We discussed the issue of baptism with the Holy Spirit. We have showed that baptism is done into the Body of Christ through the Holy Spirit. "Drinking of the Holy Spirit" implies the indwelling of the Spirit in a believer and vice versa;
- (2) We have demonstrated that the gift of tongues is vital in post-apostolic times; however, its operation in churches is possible provided all requirements mentioned above are fulfilled.

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APPENDIX
Structural scheme 1 Cor.12-14

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

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

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

4 Διαιρέσεις δὲ χαρισμάτων εἰσὶν, τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα·

5 καὶ διαιρέσεις διακονιῶν εἰσιν, καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς κύριος·

6 καὶ διαιρέσεις ἐνεργημάτων εἰσιν, ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς θεὸς ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν.

7 ἑκάστῳ δὲ δίδεται ἡ φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον.

8 ὧ μὲν γὰρ διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος δίδεται λόγος σοφίας, ἄλλῳ δὲ λόγος γνώσεως κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα,

9 ἑτέρῳ πίστις ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ πνεύματι, ἄλλῳ δὲ χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ πνεύματι,

10 ἄλλῳ δὲ ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων, ἄλλῳ [δε] προφητεία, ἄλλῳ [δὲ] διακρίσεις πνευμάτων, ἑτέρῳ γένη γλωσσῶν, ἄλλῳ δὲ ἑρμηνεῖα γλωσσῶν·

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

12 Καθάπερ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα ἐν ἔστιν καὶ μέλη πολλὰ ἔχει, πάντα δὲ τὰ μέλη τοῦ σώματος πολλὰ ὄντα ἐν ἔστιν σῶμα, οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός·

13 καὶ γὰρ ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες εἰς ἐν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν, εἴτε Ἰουδαῖοι εἴτε Ἕλληνες εἴτε δοῦλοι εἴτε ἐλεύθεροι, καὶ πάντες ἐν πνεύμα ἐποτίσθημεν.

14 καὶ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν μέλος ἀλλὰ πολλά.

15 ἂν εἶπη ὁ πούς, Ὅτι οὐκ εἰμὶ χεῖρ, οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος;

16 καὶ ἂν εἶπη τὸ οὖς, Ὅτι οὐκ εἰμὶ ὀφθαλμός, οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος·

17 εἰ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα ὀφθαλμός, ποῦ ἡ ἀκοή; εἰ ὅλον ἀκοή, ποῦ ἡ ὄσφρησις;

18 νυνὶ δὲ ὁ θεὸς ἔθετο τὰ μέλη, ἐν ἑκαστον αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ σώματι καθὼς ἠθέλησεν.

19 εἰ δὲ ἦν τὰ πάντα ἐν μέλος, ποῦ τὸ σῶμα;

20 νῦν δὲ πολλὰ μὲν μέλη, ἐν δὲ σῶμα.

21 οὐ δύναται δὲ ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς εἰπεῖν τῇ χειρὶ, Χρεῖαν σου οὐκ ἔχω, ἢ πάλιν ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῖς ποσίν, Χρεῖαν ὑμῶν οὐκ ἔχω·

22 ἀλλὰ πολλῶ μᾶλλον τὰ δοκοῦντα μέλη τοῦ σώματος ἀσθενέστερα ὑπάρχειν ἀναγκαῖά ἐστιν,

23 καὶ ἂν δοκοῦμεν ἀτιμότερα εἶναι τοῦ σώματος τούτοις τιμὴν περισσοτέραν περιτίθεμεν, καὶ τὰ ἀσχήμονα ἡμῶν εὐσχημοσύνην περισσοτέραν ἔχει,

24 τὰ δὲ εὐσχήμονα ἡμῶν οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχει. ἀλλὰ ὁ θεὸς συνεκέρασεν τὸ σῶμα τῷ ὑστερουμένῳ περισσοτέραν δούς τιμὴν,

25 ἵνα μὴ ἦ σχίσμα ἐν τῷ σώματι ἀλλὰ τὸ αὐτὸ ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων μεριμνώσιν τὰ μέλη.

26 καὶ εἴτε πάσχει ἐν μέλος, συμπάσχει πάντα τὰ μέλη· εἴτε δοξάζεται [ἐν] μέλος, συγχαίρει πάντα τὰ μέλη.

27 Ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐστε σῶμα Χριστοῦ καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέρους.

28 καὶ οὓς μὲν ἔθετο ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρῶτον ἀποστόλους, δεύτερον προφήτας, τρίτον διδασκάλους, ἔπειτα δυνάμεις, ἔπειτα χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων, ἀντιλήψεις, κυβερνήσεις, γένη γλωσσῶν.

29 μὴ πάντες ἀπόστολοι μὴ πάντες προφῆται; μὴ πάντες διδάσκαλοι; μὴ πάντες δυνάμεις;

30 μὴ πάντες χαρίσματα ἔχουσιν ἰαμάτων; μὴ πάντες γλώσσαις λαλοῦσιν; μὴ πάντες διερμηνεύουσιν;

31 ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα. Καὶ ἔτι καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν ὑμῖν δείκνυμι.

13:1 Ἐὰν ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, γέγονα χαλκὸς ἢ ἡκὼν ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον.

2 καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω προφητείαν καὶ εἰδῶ τὰ μυστήρια πάντα καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γνῶσιν καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω πᾶσαν τὴν πίστιν ὥστε ὄρη μεθιστάναι, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, οὐθέν εἰμι.

3 κἂν ψωμίσω πάντα τὰ ὑπάρχοντά μου καὶ ἐὰν παραδῶ τὸ σῶμά μου ἵνα καυχῆσωμαι, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι.

4 Ἡ ἀγάπη μακροθυμεῖ, χρηστεύεται ἡ ἀγάπη, οὐ ζηλοῖ, [ἡ ἀγάπη] οὐ περπερεύεται, οὐ φυσιοῦται,

5 οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ, οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς, οὐ παροξύνεται, οὐ λογίζεται τὸ κακόν,

6 οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ, συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ·

7 πάντα στέγει, πάντα πιστεύει, πάντα ἐλπίζει, πάντα ὑπομένει.

8 Ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε πίπτει· εἴτε δὲ προφητεῖαι, καταργηθήσονται· εἴτε γλώσσαι, παύσονται· εἴτε γνῶσις, καταργηθήσεται.

9 ἐκ μέρους γὰρ γινώσκομεν καὶ ἐκ μέρους προφητεύομεν·

10 ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον, τὸ ἐκ μέρους καταργηθήσεται.

11 ὅτε ἦμην νήπιος, ἐλάλουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐφρόνουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐλογιζόμην ὡς νήπιος· ὅτε γέγονα ἀνὴρ, κατήργηκα τὰ τοῦ νηπίου.

12 βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον· ἄρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μέρους, τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην.

13 νυνὶ δὲ μένει πίστις, ἐλπίς, ἀγάπη, τὰ τρία ταῦτα· μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη.

14:1 Διώκετε τὴν ἀγάπην, ζηλοῦτε δὲ τὰ πνευματικά, μάλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε.

2 ὁ γὰρ λαλῶν γλώσση οὐκ ἀνθρώποις λαλεῖ ἀλλὰ θεῷ· οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀκούει, πνεύματι δὲ λαλεῖ μυστήρια·

3 ὁ δὲ προφητεύων ἀνθρώποις λαλεῖ οἰκοδομὴν καὶ παράκλησιν καὶ παραμυθίαν.

4 ὁ λαλῶν γλώσση ἑαυτὸν οἰκοδομεῖ· ὁ δὲ προφητεύων ἐκκλησίαν οἰκοδομεῖ.

5 θέλω δὲ πάντας ὑμᾶς λαλεῖν γλώσσαις, μᾶλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε· μείζων δὲ ὁ προφητεύων ἢ ὁ λαλῶν γλώσσαις ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ διερμηνεύῃ, ἵνα ἡ ἐκκλησία οἰκοδομὴν λάβῃ.

6 Νῦν δέ, ἀδελφοί, ἐὰν ἔλθω πρὸς ὑμᾶς γλώσσαις λαλῶν, τί ὑμᾶς ὠφελήσω ἐὰν μὴ ὑμῖν λαλήσω ἢ ἐν ἀποκαλύψει ἢ ἐν γνώσει ἢ ἐν προφητείᾳ ἢ [ἐν] διδαχῇ;

7 ὅμως τὰ ἄψυχα φωνὴν διδόντα, εἴτε αὐλὸς εἴτε κιθάρα, ἐὰν διαστολὴν τοῖς φθόγγοις μὴ δῶ, πῶς γνωσθήσεται τὸ αὐλούμενον ἢ τὸ κιθαριζόμενον;

8 καὶ γὰρ ἐὰν ἄδηλον σάλπιγξ φωνὴν δῶ, τίς παρασκευάζεται εἰς πόλεμον;

9 οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς διὰ τῆς γλώσσης ἐὰν μὴ εὔσημον λόγον δῶτε, πῶς γνωσθήσεται τὸ λαλούμενον; ἔσεσθε γὰρ εἰς ἀέρα λαλοῦντες.

10 τοσαῦτα εἰ τύχοι γένη φωνῶν εἰσιν ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ οὐδὲν ἄφωνον·

11 ἐὰν οὖν μὴ εἰδῶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς φωνῆς, ἔσομαι τῷ λαλοῦντι βάρβαρος καὶ ὁ λαλῶν ἐν ἐμοὶ βάρβαρος.

12 οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, ἐπεὶ ζηλωταὶ ἐστε πνευμάτων, πρὸς τὴν οἰκοδομὴν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ζητεῖτε ἵνα περισσεύητε.

13 διὸ ὁ λαλῶν γλώσση προσευχέσθω ἵνα διερμηνεύῃ.

14 ἐὰν [γὰρ] προσεύχωμαι γλώσση, τὸ πνεῦμά μου προσεύχεται, ὁ δὲ νοῦς μου ἄκαρπός ἐστιν.

15 τί οὖν ἐστιν; προσεύξομαι τῷ πνεύματι, προσεύξομαι δὲ καὶ τῷ νοῖ· ψαλῶ τῷ πνεύματι, ψαλῶ δὲ καὶ τῷ νοῖ.

16 ἐπεὶ ἐὰν εὐλογῆς [ἐν] πνεύματι, ὁ ἀναπληρῶν τὸν τόπον τοῦ ιδιώτου πῶς ἐρεῖ τὸ Ἀμήν ἐπὶ τῇ σῇ εὐχαριστίᾳ; ἐπειδὴ τί λέγεις οὐκ οἶδεν·

17 σὺ μὲν γὰρ καλῶς εὐχαριστεῖς ἀλλ' ὁ ἕτερος οὐκ οἰκοδομεῖται.

18 εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ, πάντων ὑμῶν μᾶλλον γλώσσαις λαλῶ·

19 ἀλλὰ ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ θέλω πέντε λόγους τῷ νοῖ μου λαλήσαι, ἵνα καὶ ἄλλους κατηχήσω, ἢ μυρίους λόγους ἐν γλώσση.

20 Ἀδελφοί, μὴ παιδία γίνεσθε ταῖς φρεσίν ἀλλὰ τῇ κακίᾳ νηπιάζετε, ταῖς δὲ φρεσίν τέλειοι γίνεσθε.

21 ἐν τῷ νόμῳ γέγραπται ὅτι Ἐν ἑτερογλώσσοις καὶ ἐν χείλεσιν ἑτέρων λαλήσω τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ καὶ οὐδ' οὕτως εἰσακούσονται μου, λέγει κύριος.

22 ὥστε αἱ γλώσσαι εἰς σημεῖόν εἰσιν οὐ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀπίστοις, ἢ δὲ προφητεία οὐ τοῖς ἀπίστοις ἀλλὰ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν.

23 Ἐὰν οὖν συνέλθῃ ἡ ἐκκλησία ὅλη ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ πάντες λαλῶσιν γλώσσαις, εἰσέλθωσιν δὲ ιδιώται ἢ ἄπιστοι, οὐκ ἐροῦσιν ὅτι μαίνεσθε;

24 ἂν δὲ πάντες προφητεύωσιν, εἰσέλθῃ δέ τις ἄπιστος ἢ ἰδιώτης, ἐλέγχεται ὑπὸ πάντων, ἀνακρίνεται ὑπὸ πάντων,

25 τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς καρδίας αὐτοῦ φανερὰ γίνεται, καὶ οὕτως πεσὼν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον προσκυνήσει τῷ θεῷ ἀπαγγέλλων ὅτι "Οὕτως ὁ θεὸς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστίν.

26 Τί οὖν ἐστίν, ἀδελφοί; ὅταν συνέρχησθε, ἕκαστος ψαλμὸν ἔχει, διδαχὴν ἔχει, ἀποκάλυψιν ἔχει, γλῶσσαν ἔχει, ἑρμηνείαν ἔχει· πάντα πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν γινέσθω.

27 εἴτε γλῶσση τις λαλεῖ, κατὰ δύο ἢ τὸ πλεῖστον τρεῖς καὶ ἀνὰ μέρος, καὶ εἰς διερμηνεύετω·

28 ἂν δὲ μὴ ᾖ διερμηνευτής, σιγάτω ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἑαυτῷ δὲ λαλείτω καὶ τῷ θεῷ.

29 προφήται δὲ δύο ἢ τρεῖς λαλείτωσαν καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι διακρινέτωσαν·

30 ἂν δὲ ἄλλῳ ἀποκαλυφθῇ καθημένῳ, ὁ πρῶτος σιγάτω.

31 δύνασθε γὰρ καθ' ἓνα πάντες προφητεύειν, ἵνα πάντες μανθάνωσιν καὶ πάντες παρακαλῶνται.

32 καὶ πνεύματα προφητῶν προφήταις ὑποτάσσεται,

33 οὐ γὰρ ἐστίν ἀκαταστασίας ὁ θεὸς ἀλλὰ εἰρήνης. Ὡς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῶν ἁγίων

34 αἱ γυναῖκες ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις σιγάτωσαν· οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτρέπεται αὐταῖς λαλεῖν, ἀλλὰ ὑποτασσέσθωσαν, καθὼς καὶ ὁ νόμος λέγει.

35 εἰ δέ τι μαθεῖν θέλουσιν, ἐν οἴκῳ τοὺς ἰδίους ἄνδρας ἐπερωτάτωσαν· αἰσχρὸν γὰρ ἐστίν γυναικὶ λαλεῖν ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ.

36 ἢ ἀφ' ὑμῶν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθεν, ἢ εἰς ὑμᾶς μόνους κατήντησεν,

37 εἴ τις δοκεῖ προφήτης εἶναι ἢ πνευματικός, ἐπιγινωσκέτω ἃ γράφω ὑμῖν ὅτι κυρίου ἐστίν ἐντολή·

38 εἰ δέ τις ἀγνοεῖ, ἀγνοεῖται.

39 ὥστε, ἀδελφοί [μου], ζηλοῦτε τὸ προφητεύειν, καὶ τὸ λαλεῖν μὴ κωλύετε γλώσσαις·

40 πάντα δὲ εὐσημόνως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν γινέσθω.

