

Introduction: The Problems Facing the Corinthian Church

The people of the Corinthian church carried over the values of idol worship from before they became Christians.

- In pagan culture, excitement and states of spiritual ecstasy (trance-like experiences) were considered signs of a "higher spiritual level."
- Even within the church, people began competing over spectacular experiences and spiritual gifts.
- As a result, they lost sight of what it truly means to be spiritual.

We face the same dangers today:

- We feel that God is not at work unless we see visible miracles.
- We assume that those who have extraordinary experiences are especially loved by God.
- In Japanese culture, a mindset focused on receiving "benefits" can influence our faith.

1. The Essential Criterion: Confessing "Jesus Is Lord"

Scripture (v. 3)

"No one speaking by the Spirit of God says, 'Jesus be cursed,' and no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit."

Teaching

- Those who are led by the Holy Spirit confess, "Jesus is Lord."
- If this confession can be made, it is evidence that the Holy Spirit is at work, even without dramatic spiritual experiences.
- It is not a problem if one does not have so-called 'power gifts' such as prophecy, tongues, healing, or miracles.

Important:

Everyone who can make a true confession of faith has the Holy Spirit at work within them and has been given spiritual gifts.

2. The Manifestation of the Spirit Is for the Common Good

The Work of the Triune God (vv. 4-6)

Focus	What Is Given	Given By
Gifts	Spiritual gifts (abilities)	The Spirit (Holy Spirit)
Service	Roles of ministry	The Lord (Jesus Christ)
Work	Operations (power, energy)	God (the Father)

Purpose of the Holy Spirit's Work (v. 7)

"To each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

Questions for Self-Examination

- Am I using my gifts for self-fulfillment or personal glory?

- Am I using my gifts for the benefit of my brothers and sisters in the church?

The Holy Spirit works out of love for the church, producing benefit for each believer.

3. Gifts Are Given by the Same Spirit—There Is No Superiority

Examples of Spiritual Gifts (vv. 8–10)

1. Word of wisdom – Discernment to apply truth in daily life
2. Word of knowledge – Understanding to recognize what is true
3. Faith – A special faith to fulfill one's calling even in difficulty
4. Gifts of healing
5. Miraculous powers
6. Prophecy – Proclaiming God's truth to people
7. Distinguishing between spirits
8. Various kinds of tongues – Foreign or spiritual languages
9. Interpretation of tongues

Note: This is not an exhaustive list. Other gifts are described in Romans and Ephesians.

Core Message (v. 11)

“But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.”

- Both spectacular and quiet gifts come from the same Holy Spirit—there is no hierarchy.
- Miracles and healings may stand out, but hidden ministries of prayer are equally precious.
- The idea that one is not filled with the Spirit without a particular gift is mistaken.

Conclusion: Serve Where God Has Placed You, as Who You Are

Key Points to Remember

1. **One standard:** Can you confess, “Jesus is Lord”?
 - If so, the Holy Spirit dwells and works within you.
 - There is no need to compare yourself with others.
2. **One purpose:** To love fellow believers and build up the whole church.
 - Both visible and hidden ministries are valuable.
 - God has prepared a work that only you can do.
3. **No superiority:** All work comes from the same Spirit.
 - Do not be discouraged or proud when comparing yourself to others.
 - Honor and respect one another's gifts.