



## One Body, Many Members, Spirit-Baptized (1 Corinthians 12:12-13)

- The focus of 1 Corinthians 12-14 is on the topic of the practice of spiritual gifts (grace-gifts) in the church. The Corinthians had questions and Paul was aware of some misunderstandings and misrepresentations of the gifts and their practice.
- One of the truths he wants to bring clarity on is the make-up and uniqueness of the body of Christ (one body with many members) and how the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the one body. There seems to be lots of confusion about this baptism in the church which impacts its fellowship and ministry.
- In verses 12-13, Paul shares two truths that help reorient some wrong thinking that was allowing on-going divisions to worsen.

### ① Your physical body illustrates your interrelatedness in Christ's body (12:12)

- Just as our physical bodies are a perfect picture of one body with many members, so is the spiritual body of Christ (His church).
- The mention of "*Christ*" in v. 12 recalls Paul's stinging question in 1 Cor. 1:13 ("*Is Christ divided?*"). Multiple divisions had caused most of the Corinthians church's problems.
- The church is NOT a body of Christians, but the body of Christ. There is unity in plurality, but not uniformity. There is unity in diversity and diversity in unity, but unity should dominate diversity and this makes diversity meaningful and constructive (Romans 12:4-5)
- One thing guaranteed to happen in a physical body is aches, pains, dysfunction, and disease and this happens in the body of Christ as well. The operative phrase in Rom. 12:5 is "*in Christ*" because "*in Christ*" we share a unique diversity designed to benefit others and a common unity that must be preserved (Eph. 4:3).

### ② The Spirit's baptism initiates your incorporation into Christ's body (12:13)

- Paul defines here a powerful truth about the forming of the Lord's church.
  - It is something the "*Spirit*" does sovereignly apart from our effort ("*For by one Spirit*" and "*we were all made to drink of one Spirit*")
  - It is something that happens to all believers (the word "*all*" is used two times)
  - It is something that intentionally & initially connects us "*into one body*"
  - It is something that emphasizes our oneness ("*one Spirit...one body*" no matter what your ethnic or socioeconomic status)
- There is **significant confusion** about the baptism of the Holy Spirit
  - The Holy Spirit is essential to every aspect of our Christian life (The Bible, our salvation, our future resurrection, freedom from sin, empowerment to obey, quality spiritual leadership, enablement to build up others)
  - The Holy Spirit is gifted to us at salvation, indwells us, fills us, gifts us, bears fruit through us and baptizes us.
  - Confusion can reign unless you carefully study God's Word, temper your desires to experience the supernatural to Scriptural expectations, avoid confusing the filling of the Spirit with the baptism,

understand the descriptive nature of the book of Acts and its narrative about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

- There is **Scriptural clarity** about the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
  - In the **Old Testament**, we see several ministries of the Holy Spirit:
    - ≈ He created the world (Gen. 1:1; Job 33:4; Isa. 40:12)
    - ≈ He empowered four groups of people for special purposes: **Judges** like Othniel (Jdgs. 3:9-10); Gideon (Jdgs. 6:34); Jephthah (Jdgs. 11:29); Sampson (Jdgs. 14:16, 19; 15:14-15), **Craftsman** who helped build the temple (Bezalel the chief artisan – Ex. 28:3; 31:3; 35:31), **Civic leaders** like Moses (Num 11:17, 25), David (1 Sam. 16:13), Saul (1 Sam 10:6, 10) and Joshua (Num 27:18; Deut. 34:9) and **Prophets** who gave revelation from God: 70 elders (Num. 11:25), Eldad & Medad (Num 11:26-29), Balaam (Num 24:2); Ezekiel (11:5), John the Baptist (Lk 1:15) and Simeon (Lk 2:25-35)
    - ≈ He sometimes departed from people (His empowerment would come and go as needed). This happened to Saul (1 Sam. 16:14), David (Ps. 51:12), and Samson (Jdgs 16:20)
    - ≈ He revealed God’s Word (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pt 1:20; Zech. 7:12; 2 Sam 23:1-2; Neh 9:10)
    - ≈ He regenerated people (Gen 6:3) and Nicodemus (Jn. 3:5-10)
    - ≈ He will be coming in the future church age to live in His people Israel (Ezek. 36:24-28)
    - ≈ He did not permanently indwell people (in the OT): John 14:16-17: “...*you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you*”
  - In the **New Testament**, we see some promises and fulfillments regarding the ministry of the Holy Spirit
    - ≈ The promise of the baptism of the Holy Spirit from John the Baptist (Matt 3:11-12) which is the first of 7 mentions of the baptism (Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16; Jn 1:33; A. 1:5; 11:16; 1 Cor. 12:13). John the Baptist promised that Christ would baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
    - ≈ The promise that the Holy Spirit will be coming after Jesus was glorified (after His resurrection) and this would include the baptism ministry of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 7:37-40)
    - ≈ The promise of the baptism of the Holy Spirit by Jesus when He said (after His resurrection) to the disciples “*receive the HS*” (Jn 20:21-22) and His command to “*wait for the promise of the Father*” (Lk 24:49; A. 1:4-5)
    - ≈ There are four transitional descriptions of the baptism of the Holy Spirit: Pentecost #1 in Acts 2:1-6 (in Jerusalem with Jewish believers); Pentecost #2 in Acts 8:14-17 (in Samaria with Samaritan believers); Pentecost #3 in Acts 10:44-46; 11:15-17 (in Caesarea with Gentile believers); Pentecost #4 in Acts 19:1-7 (in Ephesus with 12 disciples of John the Baptist). Each of these transitions had the Pentecost confirmation of speaking in tongues and the presence of Apostles (Acts 2:14-the 12 apostles; Acts 8:14-Peter & John; Acts 10:44-Peter; Acts 19:6-Paul)
  - The only mention of the baptism of the HS in the epistles (the didactic prescriptive truth versus the narrative descriptive truth of the book of Acts) gives us a theological understanding of this event
    - ≈ It is connected with salvation since we are “*all made to drink of on Spirit*” (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:2-3)
    - ≈ It removes all ethnic (Jew/Greeks) and sociological (slave/free) barriers that previously separated and alienated us (1 Cor. 12:13)
    - ≈ It positionally incorporates each believer in Christ into the body of Christ (our new environment)
    - ≈ It is a non-experiential event that is different from how God revealed the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts (a transitional time between the Old & New testaments. A baptism that was never commanded to be sought since it was and is a sovereign act of the Holy Spirit. Tongues were not a necessary evidence-1 Cor. 12:3, but were used as a confirmation of the Holy Spirit’s gift, indwelling and baptism as the gospel spread to each new people group (Jews, Samaritans, Gentiles, disciples of John the Baptist)
    - ≈ It takes place at the moment of belief (Jn 7:37-39; Acts 11:17)

- ≈ It is universal for “*all*” believers, not those who desire and seek an enduement of special empowerment (that is the filling of the Spirit)
- ≈ It results in new life in Christ (Jn 3:3-6; Jn 7:37-39), a new union with Christ (Rom 6:1-5), a new unity (1 Cor 12:13: “*all baptized into one body*”), new abilities as the Spirit gives His grace gifts (1 Cor. 12:7, 11) and new growth in the believer’s life (2 Cor. 3:17-18).