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## CONTEXTUALIZING THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT IN I CORINTHIANS 12

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### **ABSTRACT**

The major controversy between the orthodox and evangelical Churches and the Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal Churches today revolve around the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The question that has defied unified answer is: how should the gifts of the Holy Spirit be understood, possessed and displayed in the Church of God? While the Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal churches believe that the gifts of the Holy Spirit should be displayed publicly by all Christians, particularly the gift of speaking in tongues, it is the contention of those in the mainline orthodox evangelical churches that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are for the private possession and utilization of every Christian. Thus the public display of gifts of the Holy Spirit, particularly that of speaking in tongues in public places of worship ought and should be condemned by the Church. It is against this background that this study is undertaken. The hue and cry over the actual gifts of the Holy Spirit, as against those that are faked by some Christians has been a matter of concern in the midst of the proliferation of Churches all over Nigeria. Sometimes it is disturbing to see the hypocritical display of actions which are attributed to the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Church by some notable Christians. This has led to the disintegration of several churches and thus the emergence of new ones. Using the textual analytical method, this paper critically examined I Corinthians 12 and came to the conclusion that the Church in Nigerian must be careful so that the use of the gifts of the Spirit does not lead to further disintegration and disunity.

**Key Words:** Gifts, Spirit, Body

### **INTRODUCTION**

In his opening remarks to I Corinthians 12, William Barclay (118) observes that in the Corinthian Church the most amazing things were happening through the action of the Holy Spirit. In an age of ecstasy and enthusiasm there were hysterical excitement and self-delusion and utter mistakenness as well as the real thing, and in this and the next two chapters Paul deals with real and true manifestations of the Spirit. According to Robertson and Plummer (257), the greatest mark of this Church can be summed up in one word: rivalry.

There were rivalries, cliques, and splits, hardening sometimes into parties and party leaders. About the veils, there was rivalry between men and women. At the love feast, there was rivalry between rich and poor. And here we have evidence of rivalries as to the

possession of spiritual gifts, and especially, as to those which were most demonstrative, and therefore seemed to confer most distinction.

It is essential that this divisionary tendency which characterized the church in the early times of Christianity which laid the most claims to charismata be emphasized. While it is true that these gifts in themselves were not meant to be divisive, it appears that the devil is in the habit of employing this strategy to disintegrate Christians and divert their attention from the right use of these gifts. As these chapters of the Corinthian epistles are examined, an attempt will be made to show how Paul continually referred to the unificatory, rather than the divisionary purpose of the gifts of the spirit.

### **THE EXPERIENCE OF CONVERSION**

The word in the opening verse of this chapter has generated some debate, for while some scholars take it to be neuter, referring to spiritual gifts, others take it to be masculine referring to spiritual persons. C.K. Barrett's (278) observation seems to settle the matter: "It seems impossible to find objective ground for a decision between the two possibilities, and little difference in sense is involved- spiritual persons are those who have spiritual gifts." But it appears certain that Paul's thinking in this Chapter centers around how the spiritual gifts were being used in the Church by those who claim to be spiritual. Robertson and Plummer (258) have this idea perhaps at the back of their minds in translating the word as 'spiritual manifestations', suggesting that Paul throughout Chapters 12-14 would be talking about the use of these spiritual gifts at public worship places.

Talking about public worship recalls the observation of James D.G. Dunn (397) in his article "Spirit-Baptism and Pentecostalism" that in the history of Christian thought, the disjointedness in the experience of conversion and the reception of the Holy Spirit was closely formulated first in the Catholic sacraments of baptism and confirmation. The idea that confirmation confers the gift of the Spirit was held without question until the time of Wycliffe. Thus today in Anglo-catholic tradition, although the Episcopal laying on of hands is commonly thought of as bestowing a strengthening gift of the Spirit, some continue to speak as though the Spirit is first received at that time. Relating this observation to the Corinthian church, it would appear that from the early periods of Christianity, it was not made clear that when a person became a Christian he received the Holy Spirit at the moment of conversion. The New Testament, according to A. M. Stibbs and J. I. Parker (12) in their book The Spirit Within You, repeatedly emphasizes that once individuals believe in Christ, once they are baptized in His name, and become Christians, "then this gift of the Spirit is already theirs. They did not now have to seek it as a second, subsequent blessing, complementary to

conversion.” But if this was as explicit in the New Testament as they would want us to believe, why did the Corinthian Christians behave otherwise? Why, even at these early times, did some people seek something extra apart from conversion which would be a sign of the manifestation of the Spirit of God? Can a clue to this apparent confusion be found in the book of the Acts of Apostles? These are serious questions that must be answered if we are to rightly understand Pentecostalism. In trying to resolve the problem posed by the apparent disjointedness in belief about conversion and baptism in the Spirit, Dunn, in another article “The Birth of a Metaphor – Baptized in the Spirit, Part II” (175) has observed that the recognition by Pentecostals that

‘baptized in Spirit’ is a metaphor for ‘becoming a Christian’ would have prevented Pentecostalism from embarking on the theologically hazardous road of distinguishing baptism in Spirit from conversion, - a road littered sadly with many pastoral calamities, for all that it has brought many into a much more vital experience of the Spirit.

However, Dunn’s position is based on the assumption that the term ‘baptized in Spirit,’ meant exactly ‘becoming a Christian’ in the New Testament. While it is true that Dunn in his doctoral work argued brilliantly to support that submission, his conclusions are still subject to debate. In spite of this, the argument of Stibbs and Parker (12) must be taken into consideration at this point:

Misunderstanding by individual Christians often begins at the point of their entrance into the experience of personal salvation through faith in Christ crucified and risen. This happens because the Gospel which they embrace and in which they rightly begin to glory, is incompletely understood. Perhaps it has been incompletely presented. Do preachers always stress, as they should, the gift of the Spirit as part of the good news?

That question is a serious one indeed. According to J. K. Parratts (231), in the passage under study, Paul appears to say that a Christian is one who has been born by the Spirit of God, and therefore has the Spirit of God. Paul had to make it abundantly clear from the very beginning that it is the Holy Spirit who brings a person into the experience of personal faith in Christ, for this is the over-riding import of I Corinthians 12:1

John Foster (216) posits that the Pentecostal experience of Acts 2 actually marked a confirmation of the disciple’s experience of the historical Jesus:

Before, they had faced impossibilities because He was there. Now they no longer saw Him, but there had come, unseen, but just as

truly personal, Another Presence. Another, yet not another. In so many ways the same, the great difference was that before they saw Him with them. *Now they felt this in them.*

### **CONFESSION OF JESUS**

However, according to Barclay (118) the point Paul posits here is that none can claim to be under the influence of the Holy Spirit who does not recognize Jesus as Lord. Paul affirms that none can confess the Lordship of Jesus except such a person was under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Barclay (119) further argues that when a man could say, 'Jesus is lord' it meant that he gave to Jesus the supreme loyalty of his life and the supreme worship of his heart. Having made the above summary observations about the general import of I Cor. 12:1-3, a closer scrutiny of the passage is necessary. The RSV translates v.3 thus: "Therefore I make known to you that none speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and none can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit." This translation appears to obscure the mystical element implied in the phrase used by Paul in this verse. Lenski translates the verse thus: "wherefore I give you to understand that none speaking in union with God's Spirit declares: Accursed is Jesus! And none is able to declare "Lord is Jesus!" except in a union with the Holy Spirit." Lenski has remarked that the Spirit is here twice mentioned with emphasis. Paul perhaps intends to make no sharp distinction by first calling Him God's Spirit and then calling Him Holy Spirit.

There is no doubt that there are numerous questions associated with the correct interpretation of I Cor. 12:3. According to Gordon C. Neal (691), in carrying out a correct interpretation, one must not forget that ecstatic cults like that of Dionysius, Cybele, Isis and Mithra were dominant in the city of Corinth at the time Paul was writing. It is therefore likely that some of the converts from these religions wanted to transfer their enthusiasm into the Church. However, J. Duncan M. Darrett (544) is of the opinion that it could also mean that some enthusiastic pneumatic had uttered such a phrase as 'Jesus is Accursed' or that the phrase was used by Judaizers against the Christian Jesus. Behm (354) on the other hand is of the view that it would appear that Paul believed that "it would be self-contradiction for the Christian pneumatic to curse Jesus, i.e. to deliver Him up to destruction by God." It is instructive to recall that the word in the LXX is used either in the sense of consecrated offering laid up in the Temple or as something delivered up to divine wrath, dedicated to destruction and brought under a curse. Carl Schneider (763) is of the view that it is in this sense that the word is used here. This means that the way Paul used the word shows that it would be out of place to believe that a Christian who is in union with the Holy Spirit would be influenced by the Spirit to pronounce a curse on Jesus. Remarks Schneider: "As distinct from the curse the confession inspired by the Holy Spirit, is the true Christian when is considered

as an expression of ecstatic praise to God."What then does Paul mean by Alford (576) commenting on I Cor. 12:3 said: "The foundation of all spiritual utterance is the confession of Jesus as the Lord: and without the Spirit, no such confession can be made." The idea of the control of a believer by the Spirit of God is thus embedded in the phrase Paul believed in and taught a *unio mystica* of the Christian with the Spirit as also implied in the term H. Berkhof (58) has called attention to the fact that for Paul, nothing can replace a vital and dynamic relationship between a believer and the Spirit. It is only by the control of the Spirit, or rather by the illumination of the Spirit that one can make a confession of the historical Jesus as the Lord of life. Barclay (119) puts it this way: "Paul believed that a man could only say, 'Jesus is Lord,' when the Spirit enabled him to say it. The Lordship of Jesus was not so much something which God, in His grace, revealed to him."

Alan Walker (23) makes it abundantly clear that "conversion is never instantaneous. The climax comes suddenly but it comes as the end of a process. The first touch of the Holy Spirit's influence is usually a long way back." For some people like Paul, this observation may not be totally correct, for their conversions are instantaneous. But the truth is that for most Christians they are never aware of the moment of the first touch of the Holy Spirit. They only become conscious of His activity at the point of conversion. This ignorance has led some to believe that receiving of the Holy Spirit depends upon one set of conditions, and the fullness of the Holy Spirit upon another. Because we have not His fullness, we lead to the conclusion that we have not received Him. The truth is that we should forever accept the fact that we have received Him, and press on to know the secret of His fullness.

The fact therefore that there is no visible charismatic demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit in a Christian is no evidence that such a person is not. Rather, the Holy Spirit leads Christians into a community of believers, one of which He is the Center, in which men recognize themselves and are in fellowship with one another for the only reason that they share in the same confession of sin, in the same adoption as children of God, in the same expectancy of the kingdom, and in the same calling to love and obedience. Paul wanted to make it abundantly clear that mere physical manifestation of spiritual ecstasy is not enough to conclude that a person is a Christian. Paul insists that a man must have been touched by the power of the Holy Spirit, before he can confess Jesus as Lord. It is important therefore for Christians to appreciate the fact that being a Christian and displaying gifts of the Spirit are two different experiences. However, for the later to be authentic, the former must have taken place.

## **THE AUTHOR OF THE GIFTS**

Paul emphasized the sameness of the source of all spiritual gifts by repeatedly using the phrase 'the same Spirit.' Charles Hodge (246) comments: "By the same Spirit, literally, according to the same Spirit, i.e. according to his will, or as he sees fit: The Spirit is not only the author, but the distributor of these gifts." Thus sometimes they are said to be given by and sometimes according to the Spirit. It therefore means, according to Godet ((619) that "all the various gifts rest on one and the same principle, the Spirit, so the offices tend to one and the same end, the Lord, by whose authority and for whose service they act." In other words, the same Spirit gives all gifts for the service of the Risen Lord (who is the same Spirit), under the influence of the same Spirit. More like saying that the Spirit gives the gifts for men to carry out the services which He inspires.

Thus the repetitive 'by the same Spirit' in this passage is not accidental. Paul wanted to press home in unmistakable terms the fact that regardless of the spiritual gifts exercised or possessed by any Christian, the source is none other than the Holy Spirit who has brought such a person into living faith with the risen Lord in the first place (I Cor. 12:1-3). This unity of the source of all spiritual gifts, in the midst of their variety, he emphasizes as against those who valued some and undervalued others, or who deprecated them all. On the one hand, Paul did not want those who spoke in tongues to look down on those who did not. On the other, he did not want those who did not to treat with disdain those who did. His point is that the Spirit is the universal worker in men of all those gifts, and that He gives the effects to His own according to His pleasure.

## **THE TRINITY AND THE GIFTS**

It is hazardous to try to understand this passage as dividing spiritual gifts into three classes: those that came from the Holy Spirit, from the Son and from the Father. This is the way some New Testament scholars have read this passage. Shore (335) remarks:

We have here a clear indication of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity- the Holy Spirit, the direct source of spiritual gifts; the SON, the one in whose service these gifts are to be used as ministers; the FATHER, the one supreme origin of all powers, thus bestowed in divine measure by the one Spirit, and for diverse purposes in the ministry to the one Son. Thus, underlying this passage is the vivid realization of the Trinity in unity, the unity in Trinity of the Divine Nature.

Alford (577) spells out the distinction further:

Thus we have GOD THE FATHER, the first source and Operator of all spiritual influence in all. GOD THE SON, the Ordainer in His Church of a ministry by which this influence may be legitimately brought out for edification. GOD THE HOLY GHOST, dwelling and working in the Church and effectuating in each man such measure of His gifts as HE sees fit.

These and similar attempts at rationalizing the concept of the Trinity into this passage has led to a lot of difficulties. Olshausen (340) is aware of this when he writes:

But that in the passage under consideration the unity of the spiritual principle is indicated by various expressions: 'Spirit, Lord, God,' certainly cannot arise from accident. The Substance of the Divine Being, Spirit in itself, is the principle of unity; but the relation of the Trinity, which manifests itself everywhere, expresses itself also in the gifts; and thus there are as it were gifts; and thus there are as it were gifts of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Such statements as these make one to wonder whether proponents of Trinity are not really guilty of the accusation of tritheism leveled against Christianity from time to time. Rather than seeing the gifts as those of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is it not better to suggest that when Paul used the expression 'the same Spirit,' 'the same Lord,' and 'the same God,' he was not necessarily referring to three sources of three types of spiritual gifts, but to the single source of all spiritual gifts? If he did refer to three sources of three different types of gifts, will this not utterly defeat his argument, in view of his attempt from I Corinthians 1:10 to stamp out the spirit of factionalism in the Corinthian Church? It appears rather that viewed in relation to the Spirit, they are gifts; in relation to the Lord (who is now the same Spirit since He is now conceived of as the Risen Lord); they are operations, that is, effects wrought by His power. It is the same Spirit, the same Lord, the same God who is conceived in them all: the same Spirit is the giver, and it is He who is the immediate and proximate author of all these various endowment. When in I Cor. 12:11 Paul added: "to any man as He wills," he perhaps intended to sweep away from the more gifted of the Corinthians every feeling of self-merit, and from the less favored every tendency to discontentment.

According to Godet (634) Paul believed that "all these varieties of gifts have one and the same principle: the Spirit who produces them when He comes to dwell in believers." To say that some gifts are given by one member of the Godhead over against or in addition to those given by the others is nothing short of trichotomizing the Godhead. Thus Barrett (284),

while agreeing that Paul's point in the opening paragraph of this chapter is that though Christians differ from each other, the source of the gifts is the same, however goes on to say that "unity lies ultimately in the Spirit who gives, the Lord who is served, the God who is at work – the Trinitarian formula is the more impressive because it seems to be artless and unconscious. Paul found it natural to think and write in these terms." Why must a Trinitarian formula be read into this passage? Commentators seem to forget that the concept called 'trinity' was only fully developed over two hundred years after the death of Paul. Just as later Gnostics found ideas in Paul akin to their teachings, it cannot be doubted that later Trinitarians found support in the writings of Paul. But then to say that Paul operated with a Trinitarian formula at the time he was writing is just as good as saying that Paul was a Gnostic in the sense of second century Gnosticism. In support of this position, H. Wheeler Robinson (226) has aptly remarked: "it is therefore useless and indeed an anachronism to look for a formal doctrine of the Trinity in the New Testament."

There is no doubt that Paul's aim was to call attention to the one source of all spiritual gifts. The point here is that regardless of one's gift, it has been given by the same Spirit of God, who is actually now the Risen Lord and who, gives the energy with which to effect such gifts. Thus Paul would struggle to show that there should be no deprecation of one gift over against the others. If on the other hand, the position is held that some of the gifts are from the Spirit, some from the Son, and others from the Father, then one will have to go back to the factionalism of the Corinthians: the factions of Cephas, Paul and Apollos. Paul was running away from such factitious divisions in the Church. He therefore emphasized the essential oneness of the source of all gifts, regardless of what type one may have.

Even an attempt to say, with Godet (620), that "it is God, who, after producing the gifts by the Spirit, and establishing the offices for the services of the Lord, Himself produces every good result of the gifts and offices" does not do justice to this passage. It is difficult to accept that God would give certain gifts for the service of Jesus Christ, while the Spirit produces other kinds. Whatever gifts God gives is given by the Spirit. To quote Robinson (226) again on this subject: "God gives Spirit. God has Spirit. God is Spirit." In other words, God gives Spirit because He gives Himself, not because the Spirit is separate or can be separated from Him. The Holy Spirit is at the center of it all. This does not mean a displacement of the Father and the Son, because there is no need for a displacement: the Holy Spirit is now the embodiment (in the spiritual experience of Christians) of He who was once known as Father and He who was once known historically as Son. Now it is no longer Father or Son producing gifts or energizing men to service. The Holy Spirit is the source and ground of all gifts, "His service" here having reference within the context of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and He it is who grants the divine energy necessary for the use of such gifts.



The problem of the Corinthians, according to Donald W. Burdrick (581), then is the problem of Christianity today. Just as there was jealousy, pride and rivalry in relation to other religious practices, so it was in the realm of spiritual gifts. Some of them had exalted the gifts of tongues as the gift of *par excellence*. The object of Paul's writing here, according to Alford (581), is to convince the Corinthians that their various gifts had been bestowed by God on them as members of the Christian body and that they must not, because they did not happen to possess the gifts of another, consider themselves excluded from the body – in which the weaker as well as the stronger, the less comely as well as the more comely members were necessary.

### **CONTEXTUALIZING THE GIFTS**

#### **The Body is one: 12:12-30**

The metaphor of the body which Paul used to describe the unity in diversity of spiritual gifts is apparently the best that could have been developed. In Paul's mind, the Church of Christ is the body of Christ (cf. Eph. 5:29-33). As the body of Christ, the Church is the living representative of Christ. While essentially Paul's use of the term body in Ephesians with reference to the Church was meant to spell out the unifying work of Christ in bringing together both Jews and Gentiles into the kingdom of God, the concept of the Church as the body of Christ in the Corinthian Epistle seems to focus on the functions of the members of the body. In other words, while the term is used in Ephesians to call attention to the redemptive work of Christ, it is used in the Corinthian epistle to call attention to the functions of those who, having experienced that redemption, are now members of the body. However, these two concepts are not mutually exclusive. The church in which both Jews and Gentiles meet in fellowship is the Church in which the individuality of members must be seen and respected. Thus, the individuality of the members must not be allowed to disrupt the essential unity of the body.

#### **The Body as an Organism**

The concept of the human body as an organism must have appealed greatly to Paul. An organism is a dynamic, living unit of life, with multifarious parts, organized in such a way that all the parts work towards the same goal, the preservation and sustenance of the body. It is in this sense that Paul used the metaphor of the body to describe the spiritual reality of the Body of Christ. Just as when one talks of the human body, one does not talk of the various parts in isolation, so it appears that Paul was not much concerned about the various and diverse nature of the gifts which are manifested in the Body of Christ in themselves as gifts, as much as he was interested in the purpose to which such gifts were applied in enabling the Body of Christ to achieve her missionary and evangelistic tasks.

Apparently, the Corinthians were disposed to exaggerating the value of certain gifts, which from their extraordinary character, were more liable to strike the physical senses. In particular, it seems, the gifts of speaking in tongues, miracles, and prophecy received special attention. From this prejudice, Godet (640) observes, two evils ensued: on the one hand, those who did not possess such gifts kept aloof, discontented and discouraged and the Church, was deprived of their services, which might have been very needful. On the other hand, those who possessed these gifts (particularly the gift of tongues) took pleasure in displaying them in the assemblies, so as to prevent the less brilliant gifts from filling the place which should have been reserved for them. For Paul, the Church is the body of Christ, the organ which the Risen Lord, since His departure, has created on the earth to realize His design and carry out His purposes, as He formerly did by means of his body, strictly so called, when He was here below. Christ Himself now dwells in believers by His Spirit, who thereby becomes His active members, and the action which He carries out through them proceeds from the extraordinary forces which He communicates to them. It appears today that some members of that Body feel that they deserve more privileges and respect than others in view of the special gifts they believe they have.

### **The Parts of the Body**

Godet (641) is of the view that while Paul used the eye and the hand to represent those members who are highly favored because of certain charismata, the foot and the ear represent those less conspicuous and favored members. However, Paul spells out clearly the fact that just as the eye cannot do without the foot so too the foot cannot do without the eye. In using the illustration, Paul was actually raising the question: "Can one Christian do without another in the Body of Christ?" In other words, can one speak of a member of the Body as being insignificant because of his inconspicuous office or gift? What Paul wished to communicate to the proud Corinthians, in the opinion of Godet (645), it that it pertains to the honor of the whole church that those who are charged with the humblest function and least prominent services should be the object of the greatest marks of respect. We should say, if we dared so to paraphrase: "To the brother serving in the agape, the best portion. To the brother who sweeps the floor, the most honourable place besides the president."

Social discrimination among men is an age-long phenomenon. When it is practiced among unbelievers Christians are in a position to appreciate their predicament because of the absence of the love of Christ in their lives. But when right within the church there is discrimination on the ground of possession of spiritual gifts, then there is cause to worry. It could be argued, and rightly so, that human discrimination appears to exist in spite of man. The very fact that God created people differently (cf. the adage that says that the five fingers are not equal), could be enough ground for discrimination. Despite this fact however, the

church should be seen as a place where the clerk and the professor should be able to have real and meaningful social interactions together. The Corinthian Christians placed undue emphasis on the possession of certain gifts of the Spirit.

## **CONCLUSION**

Our study thus far has revealed that for the Apostle Paul, what matters was not the type of spiritual gifts a man has, but the use to which it is put. On the number of spiritual gifts there are, John R.W. Stott (88) has this to say: "The interest of some Christians seems to be confined mainly to three gifts, namely, tongues, prophecy and healing. But there are obviously more gifts than that exciting trio." How true! Even Paul himself gave more than the 'exciting trio' in his writing (I Cor. 12:8-10, 28, 29-30; Rom. 12:6-8; Eph. 4:11). Michael Green (192) has observed that there are two reasons why it is impracticable to treat the nine gifts of I Cor. 12:8-10 as exhaustive in number and quality. First is that Paul's list of these gifts or functions differ, as reflected in the list. The second is that the lists oscillate between spiritual gifts and spiritual functions. But the two belong together, "for spiritual gifts are meaningless unless exercised by spiritual people, intent on serving the Lord with their gifts" (Green, 193)

Moreover, the dynamic nature of the Body of Christ is such that it is not likely that one would be able to exhaust all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which He can decide to manifest in His Body. The question should not be how many gifts or which of them are the best. For Paul, "the gifts and offices which have a modest appearance are necessary, no less than the others, to the prosperity of the whole" (Godet, 644). This was why Paul could consider that mercy is a gift of the Spirit (Roman 12:6-8). Or that one who administers has been given that gift by the Spirit (I Cor. 12: 29-30). Some attempts have been made to categorize the nine gifts of I Cor. 12:8-10 into those involving the intellect (wisdom, knowledge); those involving faith (faith, healing, miracles, prophecy and discerning of spirits), and those involving tongue (tongues and interpretation of tongues). However, if it is realized that even in this same chapter Paul altered the arrangement of these gifts, then it would be appreciated that it was not the categorization that was uppermost in his mind.

All this lead to one conclusion: spiritual gifts are as diverse as the people who make up the Body of Christ. In the church there are all kinds of people. These people have been given fitting gifts by the Holy Spirit in order that the church would be able to perform her God-given responsibility of reaching the lost world. The Spirit is the breath of the church. Therefore one should not limit the Spirit to codified number of gifts. The Spirit of God is at liberty to use anybody in the Body of Christ the way He pleases. The members are to respect one another in mutual service, in the spirit of love. In this connection, Hodge (238)

is of the opinion that Paul's objective in calling attention to the fact that the Holy Spirit is the owner of the church and animates the church is to the singular end that all the members of the Body of Christ will individually and collectively be enabled to fulfill his or her God-appointed responsibilities.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

In view of the findings of this study, one would like to make the following recommendations.

- a. Christians should be made to appreciate the role of the Holy Spirit in the conversion experience. The moment Christians get to know that it is the same Holy Spirit who leads them into salvation that is in charge of the spiritual gifts, then we would have less acrimony in the Church.
- b. Church leaders should be led to deemphasize the display of spiritual gifts in the Church. If more Christians are made to realize that spiritual gifts are meant for the development of individuals, then the competition among Christians to show off their spiritual gifts will be greatly reduced.
- c. Finally, we would like to recommend that those orthodox churches that are not yet allowing their members to exercise the gifts of the Spirit freely should do so. It is clear from the writings of Paul that there are spiritual gifts that are meant for the development of the church of Christ. The manifestation of such gifts should be allowed in the Body of Christ.

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