

# DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

## A Study of 1 Corinthians



### 5. Misunderstanding about Spiritual Gifts

#### Introduction

One of the problems that the church in Corinth faced, was the misuse of spiritual gifts. At the beginning of Paul's letter he tells them that they are not lacking in spiritual gifts, however they were not always using them correctly, and so in chapters 12 and 14, he gives teaching to address this situation. The gifts he is speaking about here are not natural gifts that God gives to all men, but rather gifts that are given by the Holy Spirit to believers. Nine gifts are mentioned in these verses.

Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 1 Corinthians 14:1-19

#### **1. Spiritual gifts 1 Corinthians 12:4-11**

- ✘ What are the spiritual gifts God has given his people? 1 Corinthians 12:8-11. Also see Romans 12:6-8.
- ✘ Where do these spiritual gifts come from? 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11
- ✘ If God gives gifts as he chooses, should we ask for gifts, or should we passively wait and allow God to give us them if he wants to? 1 Corinthians 12:31, 14:1, 39
- ✘ What should be our motive for desiring spiritual gifts? 1 Corinthians 12:7, 1 Corinthians 13:1-2

#### **2. Gift of speaking in tongues 1 Corinthians 14:1-19**

Of all the gifts of the Spirit, the gift of speaking in tongues has created the most misunderstanding, so we will spend some time discussing it.

- ✘ What are the benefits of speaking in tongues? 1 Corinthians 14:2, 4-5

We can see that the gift of speaking in tongues is first of all given for our benefit. The Apostle Paul said he spoke in tongues more than any of them. See 1 Corinthians 14:18. However there is also the gift of tongues that is given to be used in the church.

- ✘ Why did Paul say that when the gift of tongues is used in the church there should be an interpretation? 1 Corinthians 14:2-4, 6-12, 16-19
- ✘ Some people believe that since speaking in tongues is called the least of the gifts it is not important at all. What should our attitude be do you think? Discuss.
- ✘ Why does Paul emphasize prophecy as being a gift we should desire? 1 Corinthians 14:1, 3-5, 31

- ✘ Share a time when you have been ministered to by someone using a spiritual gift. Why was it significant to you?

### Conclusion

God's desire is that his children are empowered by the Holy Spirit to do his work. In fact we can't do his work in our own strength. We need to depend on the Spirit. As we learn to walk in the Spirit, he will give us the gifts we need at any given time. In one situation it may be a word of wisdom, but in another it may be a prophetic word to encourage someone. They all come from the same Holy Spirit. Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, not to discourage them from using the gifts, but rather to use them correctly when they met together as a body. Let's do what Paul urges us to do: "earnestly desire the spiritual gifts."