

**1205 Head covering, breaking of bread, spiritual gifts, and one body - 1Co(11)1-(12)31  
(by Whirlwind)**

First, we discussed women's head coverings and a controversial issue: how they should be worn. Second, we addressed how the Corinthian church gathered at that time. Third, we discussed the Communion, which the Lord Jesus Himself instituted; the bread and cup are for the remembrance of the Lord, not for union with Him, and we referenced a previous article. Fourth, in the first part of a series on spiritual gifts, we saw that we should speak up when necessary and discussed words of wisdom, words of knowledge, and the discernment of spirits. Fifth, we spoke of God's church as one body drinking from one Holy Spirit. Finally, in the second part of the series on spiritual gifts, we discussed order and briefly mentioned other Scripture passages regarding spiritual gifts.

Please note that this article is an expansion of the topicwise Bible study held on Sunday (8/30/26). Unless otherwise specified, verses refer to those in NASB95. If this article refers previous articles, they can all be found on our website, '<https://a-christian-voice.com/>'; click on 'Understanding Spiritual Life'.

**1. On women covering their heads and how they should do so**

**"Be imitators (G3402, follower, noun) of me, just as I also am of Christ.**

**Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you. But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ. Every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head. But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for she is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved. For if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head. For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God. Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him, but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? For her hair is given to her for a covering. But if one is inclined to be contentious, we have no other practice, nor have the churches of God."(1 Corinthians 11:1-16)**

We have discussed before that Paul wanted believers to follow him just as he followed the Lord Jesus, not to engage in personal worship of him. He then commended them, primarily because they held fast to what he had passed on to them and because they remembered him in everything.

One of his teachings is, "But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ."(1 Corinthians 11:3) He also says this in another passage: "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body."(Ephesians 5:23) Since He is the head of the whole church, He is certainly the head of each individual.

During the time of the Incarnation, God was indeed the head of Christ, for "But He answered and said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.""(Matthew 15:24) The Scripture further states, "So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.""(John 20:21) Since it was God who sent Him during this period, it is evident that God was the Head. But we must understand that at all other times, Jesus Christ is one of the three Persons of the Trinity.

"Every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head. But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for she is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved. For if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head."(1 Corinthians 11:4-6) This is also consistently stated in Scripture: "Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him, but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? For her hair is given to her for a covering."(1 Corinthians 11:13-15) Women should indeed cover their heads when praying or prophesying. But this passage tells us that God has already provided for this—long hair serves as a covering for women, so there is no need for an additional physical sign of head covering. It is very clear that women should have long hair, while men should not. If we do not follow the Bible's teaching, the distinction between men and women will be blurred.

Christians believe that both the Old and New Testaments are inspired by God and "do not compromise the Word of God"; therefore, this passage refers to being spiritually covered, not—as some people think—that women need an additional physical sign of covering. If there were an additional physical sign of covering, it would serve no purpose other than to boast about one's own piety. Such people truly need to know, "so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.""(1 Corinthians 1:31) Do not boast oneself. Indeed, "...if one is inclined to be contentious, we have no other practice, nor have the churches of God."(1 Corinthians 11:16)

Prior to this, he explained the reason why women should cover their heads and clearly stated, "...the woman is the glory of man."(1 Corinthians 11:7) This is true, but there is a proper order, for "For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels."(1 Corinthians 11:8-10) Understand that "However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God."(1 Corinthians 11:11-12) God has ordained this according to His absolute sovereignty.

## **2. How the church in Corinth met at that time**

**"But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you. Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you."(1 Corinthians 11:17-22)**

**He clearly stated how the Corinthian church was gathering at that time: "...you come together not for the better but for the worse."(1 Corinthians 11:17) During their gatherings, they divided themselves into groups and factions, with the aim of highlighting those who were more experienced. This was following people, which is wrong; instead, they were to "...be imitators (G3402, follower) of God, as beloved children."(Ephesians 5:1)**

**He also clearly states in the passage, "Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk."(1 Corinthians 11:20-21) Finally, he uses a series of questions to explain why he does not commend their way of eating together.**

## **3. Lord Jesus Himself instituted the Communion in Lord's Supper as a memorial of the Lord**

**"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.**

**Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.**

**So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment. The remaining matters I will arrange when I come."(1 Corinthians 11:23-34)**

**The institution of the Communion in the Lord's Supper mentioned here was established by the Lord Himself for the purpose of commemorating Him, not—as some believe—for the purpose of union with Him. What is stated here is essentially consistent with what is recorded in Luke 22:14-20. We previously discussed these points in "3. The ceremony of setting up bread and cups at the Passover feast" of "1081 Discussion of Judas' betrayal and the**

ceremony of bread and cups – Jesus (33)," so we will not elaborate further here; please refer to that article.

It is also explicitly stated here: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."(1 Corinthians 11:26). It speaks of partaking of the Lord's bread and drinking from the Lord's cup in a worthy manner. The principle is to first examine oneself; if one does not discern that it is the Lord's body, one eats and drinks one's own judgment, which leads to: "...many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep."(1 Corinthians 11:30) But know this: "...when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world."(1 Corinthians 11:32) When "...you come together to eat, wait for one another. If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, ..." (1 Corinthians 11:33-34) These are the rules for eating during the gathering.

#### **4. The first part of a series on spiritual gifts**

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills."(1 Corinthians 12:1-11)

This is the first mention of spiritual gifts, but we cannot say that a person is spiritual simply because they have spiritual gifts, for we do not know how God works; He has absolute sovereignty. We know the Bible clearly states that the church in Corinth possessed spiritual gifts when Paul wrote his first letter, for the Scripture says, "I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge."(1 Corinthians 1:4-5) Yet they were still carnal, as can be seen from this passage: "...you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?"(1 Corinthians 3:3) Paul reminded them of this in his earlier letter, and they later repented, as is clearly stated in the latter letter: "For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it—for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while— I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us."(2 Corinthians 7:8-9) Therefore, Paul was right to write his first letter, and so are we; when we need to speak, we must speak.

The passage then goes on to describe their past condition and their present state, in which they are moved by the Holy Spirit. The latter is expressed as follows: "...no one speaking by

the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit."(1 Corinthians 12:3) It then goes on to say, "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons."(1 Corinthians 12:4-6) It particularly emphasizes that there is one. Indeed, "But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."(1 Corinthians 12:7) He then lists some spiritual gifts; we have not discussed all those explicitly mentioned, but have only touched on some that might not be immediately obvious.

First, he speaks of words of wisdom. One example is found in this passage: "But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues; and you will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you."(Matthew 10:17-20) These are words of wisdom spoken by the Holy Spirit.

Then there are the words of knowledge. One example is what we have repeatedly emphasized in our topicwise Bible study: such studies can at most provide you with knowledge. For a person to "allow the Holy Spirit to lead the Bible study," they must establish a direct relationship with God. Speaking of this, it reminds me of a pastor whose biblical interpretation was sometimes way off the mark, yet he believed he possessed words of wisdom. During his sermons, he would call certain people from the congregation to the front and speak directly to them in a loud voice using those so-called words of wisdom. Although I attended his services for some time, I never heard him mention whether his words would come to pass. Yet the Bible clearly states: "You may say in your heart, 'How will we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him."(Deuteronomy 18:21-22) He is definitely not a prophet, but the principle is the same.

Therefore, I can only suspect that this person is using the name of the Kingdom of God for his own gain, much like a "success philosophy," because the principle of the Kingdom of Heaven is to allow the tares and the wheat to grow together. The Scripture clearly states, "But he said, 'No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn."'"(Matthew 13:29-30)

Next comes the teaching on discerning spirits. This refers not only to distinguishing in the spiritual realm whether something comes from God, but also to understanding the spirit of every individual, for Paul clearly states, "At Lystra a man was sitting who had no strength in his feet, lame from his mother's womb, who had never walked. This man was listening to Paul as he spoke, who, when he had fixed his gaze on him and had seen that he had faith to be made well, said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he leaped up and began to walk."(Acts 14:8-10) Paul was able to discern whether that man had faith.

As for whether Paul could interpret tongues, the Bible does not explicitly state this; we can only infer it logically. First, the Bible clearly states that he possessed other gifts; he was honestly listing all of them. Given that "what God tells us through the Bible is consistent," it stands to reason that he had the gift of interpreting tongues. Furthermore, when he was in the third heaven, he "was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible." (2 Corinthians 12:4). If he had not understood a single word at that time, it would not have made much sense. Moreover, he only said that these were words inexpressible, he did not say that he did not understand them. If he did understand them, what difficulty would there be in interpreting tongues?

Finally, we must emphasize that the Holy Spirit, one of the three Persons of the Trinity, possesses absolute sovereignty, for "...one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills." (1 Corinthians 12:11). Since it is "just as He wills," it is absolute sovereignty.

#### **5. The Church of God Is one body that drinks from one Holy Spirit**

"For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. If they were all one member, where would the body be? But now there are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it." (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)

You see, his logic is very clear: through the baptism of the Spirit, people become one body of Christ—just as we understand the concept of a body being composed of many members. Therefore, "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:13) He then uses an analogy to illustrate that the members are meant to work together. Here, too, God's absolute sovereignty is emphasized once again, for the Scripture says, "But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired." (1 Corinthians 12:18)

It then goes on to say, "On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary." (1 Corinthians 12:22) If we look at this verse in isolation, we might not understand what it means, but when viewed in context, it becomes clear that this refers to God's church: "...But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another." (1 Corinthians 12:24-25) So this is about members in the church working together in harmony, regardless of whether you consider someone to be weak or not. We cannot use worldly standards to judge what is honorable or beautiful; we must understand that "And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it." (1 Corinthians 12:26-27)

He makes it very clear—He has been speaking about the Holy Spirit all along. What we need is the Holy Spirit's lead; we must place ourselves in the hands of the Holy Spirit of the Triune God. In fact, this was already explained in the Old Testament: God's perspective on things is very different from that of humans. When Moses' father-in-law saw Moses sitting in judgment over the people, he suggested, "Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens." (Exodus 18:21) This seemed reasonable, but it did not work out, for in the end, "So I (Moses) took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and appointed them heads over you, leaders of thousands and of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, and officers for your tribes." (Deuteronomy 1:15) People look for talent, but God values wisdom—and we must understand that true wisdom comes from above.

Unfortunately, some churches today prioritize talent above all else, going against God's original intent. Remember, when the disciples told Jesus that the Pharisees were objecting to Him, "But He answered and said, 'Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted. Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit.'" (Matthew 15:13-14) Although this was said to the Pharisees, the principle remains the same. Though God loves the world, there are indeed times when He reaches the point of letting things take their course. We must not allow things to reach that point, for that would be an irreparable tragedy. We must do what we are called to do while God is still willing to work.

## **6. A second discussion on spiritual gifts and some verses talking about gifts**

"And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way." (1 Corinthians 12:28-31)

This passage clearly states that the gifts God has established in the church are arranged in a specific order. This order is evident, for the Scripture says, "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,

having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord."(Ephesians 2:19-21) We note that speaking in tongues is not included among the gifts in this order; however, since the Bible says that everything should be done for the edification of others, the Scripture states, "What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two or at the most three, and each in turn, and one must interpret; but if there is no interpreter, he must keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God."(1 Corinthians 14:26-28) This naturally leads to the topic of the gift of interpreting tongues. Today, some churches speak what they call "speaking in tongues"—words they themselves do not understand—yet no one interprets them. This blatantly disregards the Bible's teaching and is truly wrong.

The verse says: "But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way."(1 Corinthians 12:31) In other words, "But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love."(1 Corinthians 13:13) That being said, this does not mean we should not live a life of faith and hope. We will share more on this next time, so I won't elaborate further now. For now, let's briefly discuss a topic related to spiritual gifts.

First, this passage below makes it very clear, so we'll simply list the Scripture as follows: "so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness."(Romans 12:5-8)

Elsewhere it says, "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers."(Ephesians 4:11) The only point to be made is what we mentioned earlier: if you look at the original text in Strong's Concordance, you will see that "pastor" was originally a human title, and that shepherding and teaching were originally one and the inseparable duties—which is also the duty of those now called pastors. Therefore, God will use pastors who correctly interpret Scripture.

Remember, "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow."(James 1:17) Therefore, "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."(1 Peter 4:10-11)