

Summit Woods Baptist Church
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

1 Corinthians 12:1-3

❖ Day 1

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-3.

For these lessons, the sermon text is provided in a format that visually helps display the structure of the paragraph or section of text. The main verbs are underlined. Generally, the main indicative clauses remain to the left, and the supporting clauses are either directly underneath when they have equal priority to what comes before, or are tabbed to the right when the clause supports, develops, or draws a conclusion from a neighboring clause.

¹Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers,
I do not want you to be uninformed.
²You know that
 when you were pagans
 you were led astray to mute idols,
 however you were led.
³Therefore I want you to understand that
 no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!”
 and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.

1. Review: Briefly think back through chapters 1-11, and list several of the main sinful heart issues that Paul has addressed in the letter so far. (Note that it will be helpful to continue to keep these in mind as we study the rest of the letter.)
2. In this week’s paragraph, has Paul moved to a new topic, or is this the same topic as the previous paragraphs? How do you know? (Hint: see also 7:1; 7:25; 8:1; 16:1; 16:12)
3. What is the new topic mentioned in verse 1?
4. In his letters, Paul often gives information/theology before he gives instructions/commands. If this is the start of a new idea, which do you expect here?

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5. Scan ahead and determine where Paul moves from the topic of spiritual gifts/speech/tongues to the next topic. Then back up to find the transition between information/theology and instruction/command.
 - a. Where does this topic end?
 - b. Where is the transition between information and instruction?

❖ Day 2

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-3 again.

6. Looking at this week's paragraph, if the Corinthians are "uninformed" when Paul is writing to them, what is he implying about their current "spiritual" practices?
7. As a whole, this paragraph takes a *before* and *after* shape...
 - a. What words in the text describe the Corinthians *before*?
 - b. What words apply to them *after*?
 - c. How do they relate to God differently *after* than *before*, and what must have occurred to move them from *before* to *after*?
8. What is the highlighted difference between idols and the Spirit of God in this paragraph? And where else in the Bible can you find this distinction made?

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9. According to verse 2, what was the result for the Corinthians of following the pagan religions and worshipping idols?
10. In verse 3, what two alternative statements does Paul present?
11. What is the driving force behind which statement a person would make?

❖ Day 3

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-3 again.

Note: As we consider the topic of spiritual gifts, and especially speaking in tongues, it is interesting to note that *glossolalia* (the utterance of unrecognizable language unknown to the speaker) has been a common practice in many religions throughout history as a sign of superior spirituality.

12. If idols are mute, then who is generating the speech when a person speaks for a pagan deity?
13. Because the Spirit of God is not mute, who is generating the speech of spiritual believers?
14. What is the primary message that the Holy Spirit speaks through believers?
15. Based on 6:20 and 7:23, how is this message made *personal* for the speaker and not just a general announcement?
16. Can an unbeliever physically utter the syllables Gee-zus eez lawrd? What do you think Paul means by the word 'say' in verse 3?

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17. In the pagan religions, certain practices give great personal status to the practitioner. Possession of supernatural knowledge or wisdom is one such practice; ecstatic episodes where someone speaks on behalf of a deity is another. Read how Paul already explained the scant value of this type of wisdom in 1:18-31.
- a. What did Paul give as the alternative to worldly wisdom in that passage?

 - b. In this week's paragraph, whose status is the genuinely spiritual person most concerned with?
18. In light of the common sinful heart issues that Paul has been confronting in scenario after scenario in the letter so far, how should the reality that the Holy Spirit's actions will serve to exalt Christ (see John 16:13-14) also address these issues?

As we spend the next few months studying 1 Corinthians 12-14, we encourage you to periodically read all three chapters in one sitting.

In preparation for Sunday, pray that we be properly informed about spiritual gifts and that we will speak truth by the Holy Spirit.