

“No Nobodies!” (1 Corinthians 12:12-31)

Ever since I was in middle school, I have been fascinated with bodybuilding. Professional bodybuilders are interesting creatures. They are incredibly disciplined and will do anything, legal or illegal, to win a bodybuilding competition. Due to the competitive nature of bodybuilding, in order to win a competition one cannot have any weak body parts. For example, if your calves will not bulge like diamonds in the rough you will never be able to be a competitive bodybuilder. If your lats will not flare like a king cobra you will not progress. If your biceps will not grow a peak like the Himalayas you might as well hang it up. For all of their peculiarities, bodybuilders understand the value and significance of every single part of the body. There can be no undeveloped or lagging parts. Every single body part must develop and function at its absolute best.

Did you know that God is also interested in bodybuilding? He is...although His idea of bodybuilding is of a different nature. God wants to build every muscle in His church. He doesn't want there to be any superior or inferior body parts. He wants everyone and everything to be symmetrical. There can be no undeveloped or lagging parts. God expects every part of the body to grow and do its work.

In our passage, Paul is going to discuss the importance of church teamwork. This is expected because the Old and New Testaments have a corporate emphasis. This is not to depreciate the fact that people become Christians on an individual basis, but that once one is a Christian the focus is always on the health, unity, and well being of the whole.¹ In 1 Cor 12:12-31, Paul will inform us that *everybody is somebody because we're in this together.*²

1. Appreciate the solidarity of the body (12:12-13). These first two verses give the theological basis for the body imagery that is developed in the rest of this passage. Paul states that every part of the body is essential because every believer is a member of the church. In 12:12, he writes, **“For³ 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.”** This verse is a tongue twister and can be a little confusing. It can help to change the word “member” to “organ,” like the organs of the body.⁴ The term “body” is introduced in 12:12 and then repeatedly employed by Paul 18 times throughout the remainder of the chapter.⁵ The word “one” occurs five times in 12:12-13. Hence, the emphasis is on unity and oneness. Our body of many members is unified in one body. Paul is so intent on driving home this point of our oneness in the church that he refers to Christ as the church. This is one of the places in Scripture where all believers collectively are called “Christ.” Paul had received an inkling of this truth on the road to Damascus when he fell to the earth and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” (Acts 9:4) He had been persecuting Christians, not realizing that in so doing he was persecuting Christ. Saul, who later became Paul, would one day learn that every believer is a member of Christ's body. Likewise, you and I are members of the body of Christ...and we are one body.

In 12:13, Paul explains the reason for the oneness of the church: we have all been placed into the body of Christ. Paul puts it like this: **“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.”** Paul argues that every Christian has experienced Spirit baptism. Notice the word “all” as well as the past tense, “were baptized.” Every believer shares in this experience. It occurs the moment we trust in Jesus Christ.⁶ In Spirit baptism the Holy Spirit baptizes the believer into the body of Christ. He makes us a part of His church. The baptism of the Holy Spirit means if you belong to Jesus Christ, you belong to everyone else who belongs to Jesus Christ. This means the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a matter of having a certain level of spiritual maturity, achieving some advanced spiritual state, or receiving a “second blessing.” On the contrary, every believer experiences Spirit baptism regardless of his or her race or social status.⁷ We are now on equal footing in the sense that we are all members of the body of Christ.

The phrase “the baptism of the Holy Spirit” is confusing because biblically it refers to one trusting Christ as Savior, but it is used today of an empowering, yielding, post-conversion experience in the lives of believers. I do not deny the reality of this subsequent experience, but I prefer the description “Lordship experience.” We might also speak of deeper fillings of the Holy Spirit.

The figure of drinking of one Spirit recalls John 7:37-39 where Jesus invited the thirsty to come and drink of Him to find refreshment. Baptism and drinking are both initiation experiences and take place at the moment we believe in Christ.⁸ In the first figure the Spirit places the believer into Christ, and in the second the Spirit comes into the Christian.⁹

Now, having been introduced to this important analogy between the human body and the body of Christ, I would say there are two key problems that constantly plague the church and prevent us from enjoying unity in diversity. Those two tendencies are what we might simply call an inferiority complex and a superiority complex, or self-pity and pride. When certain Christians think they just don’t have anything to offer and therefore fail to participate in the life of the church, the body cannot be complete. On the other hand, when some think of themselves as God’s gift to the church and don’t allow others to contribute their gifts, again the body cannot function well. If this passage teaches anything, it teaches us that both inferiority feelings and superiority feelings are out of bounds in Christ’s church. *Everybody is somebody because we’re in this together.*

2. Do not underestimate your importance to the body of Christ (12:14-20). In these verses, Paul, in a somewhat humorous vein, attempts to get his point across that every member of the body has a different role to play, but that all of these parts are needed in order for the body to function as a unit. He personifies two different body parts—the foot and the ear—to say, “Because I am not the hand/eye, I am not of the body.”¹⁰ In this section, certain members have an inferiority complex. In 12:14, Paul writes, **“For the body is not one member, but many.”** Paul is making a simple statement of fact that every part of the body, every organ, is valuable. *Everybody is somebody because we’re in this together.*

In 12:15-16, Paul writes, **“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.”** The phrase “I am not a part of the body” occurs in both 12:15 and 12:16. This is an indication of a feeling of insignificance: “No one thinks that I am important or significant. I have little to contribute to this ministry. I don’t really matter to this church.” The foot is jealous of the hand because he is covetous of the hand’s prominence. The hand is in the public and in the limelight, but the foot is in confinement inside a shoe. We rarely permit our feet to go out in public. We manicure hands and put ointment on them. We make hands beautiful by putting rings on them. We put jewelry on the hand but rarely on the foot. Hands take a scalpel and do delicate operations. They play the piano or violin. No wonder the foot feels inferior! During a church vote, no one in a meeting says, “Raise your foot” it’s always “Raise your hand!” The foot thinks, “The hand has so much dexterity, it can pick up things so easily.” The foot has an inferiority complex because the hand is out in the limelight!

Yet, the body would be in bad shape without a foot. Did you know that you use more than 200 different muscles to walk?¹¹ If your feet and their muscles are not working well you aren’t going very far. Furthermore, if you dislocate a tiny bone in your foot your whole body is miserable. Feet are awfully important. So why should the foot say, “I don’t count; I’m not important; no one ever notices me; no one cares about what I do. If I do anything, no one sees me or cares about me. I don’t belong. I might as well give up.” No, God rewards the foot based on being a foot. If you have been gifted as a foot it’s easy to look at those gifted as hands and think how skilled, how capable they are, and that you’re not important at all. However, all God expects is that you do what you can with what you have. Remember that each part of the body is important. *Everybody is somebody because we’re in this together.*

Similarly, the ear feels inferior to the eye. The eye is out front whereas the ear is on the side. No one ever talks about the ears. Lovers do look into each other's eyes; they do not look into each other's ears! The only one who looks in our ears is our mother and all she ever says is, "Wash those dirty ears!" They say wonderful things about the eye. Eyes come in color. Poets write poems about the eye but never about the ear. There is nothing very impressive, appearance-wise, about ears. Has anyone ever approached you and said, "You have incredibly attractive ears?" I seriously doubt it. Yet, your ears are critical.

Unfortunately, some at Corinth who lacked the more spectacular gifts of others were discouraged and began to ask whether they had any place or function in the church.¹² So Paul moves from the sublime to the ridiculous by envisioning an absurd scenario. In 12:17, he asks, **"If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?"** Try to picture being an "eye-body"—one massive six-foot eye! How gross it would be if the whole body was an eye. How useless and unattractive. You couldn't hug or kiss. You wouldn't have anything to kiss with, unless you "batted each other" when you got up close. You would get hurt all the time as you rolled around the house. We would see everything but hear nothing. Think of trying to drive a car or getting into bed.¹³ It isn't so wonderful being an eye. The same could be true if the whole body was an ear. The body depends on union of all the members to function, so it is utterly ridiculous for the body to consist of one member. If all the church had was the pastor/teacher, how impoverished would that church be? A body with just an eye would not be able to hear. A body with just an ear would not be able to smell. We must always recognize that any public ministry is built on a private ministry. My preaching is only as powerful as our praying. The worship is only as fruitful as our nursery. The point is that we need each gift for the body of Christ to function.

In 12:18-20, Paul emphasizes that God sovereignly places the gifts in the church that He desires. Paul writes, **"But now God has placed¹⁴ 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."** Paul makes it clear that God is the one that has gifted every church the way He wants her gifted. Notice that God "placed the members...just as He desired." The church is all about the sovereignty of God. We are one because of God's work. *Everybody is somebody because we're in this together.*

[Beginning at 12:21, we have a transition from those who feel inferior in their gifts to those who feel superior. In this section, we see members who suffer from a superiority complex.]

3. Do not overestimate your importance to the body of Christ (12:21-26). Paul explains that we need to squash spiritual pride because we all need each other. He writes, **"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.'"** With this statement, Paul seems to be getting closer to the difficult issue being faced in Corinth. As we have seen on several occasions in this letter, pride was indeed a problem among the Corinthians.¹⁵ Paul needs to get across that *all* of the members in Corinth need each other, and no one is dispensable.¹⁶

In 12:22-25, Paul continues his rebuke: **"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."** Paul argues that every member of the body is necessary. There are no exceptions. Those body parts that are deemed weaker, less honorable, or less presentable¹⁷ are all critically important. Paul rejected the Corinthians criteria for evaluating which gifts were most honorable. They had chosen the most visible or audible gifts for selfish reasons. The sole purpose of the gifts was to build up the body of Christ; the true criterion for the greatness of any gift would be its usefulness to the body of Christ.

How does this apply to the church? Every church has people who are out in the forefront and love the public spotlight. But what is really essential to the ongoing life of the church is the people behind the scenes—those who serve faithfully and quietly (and often are the ones who make the leaders look good). We tend to forget that many of the strengths we so admire in one person are often incompatible with the strengths we admire in another. The grace of a figure skater is useless to a Sumo wrestler. The diligent research and study of my favorite theologian doesn't leave much time for the globetrotting compassion of my favorite missionary.

In 12:26, Paul pens one of the most powerful verses in the Scriptures: **“And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.”** If you've ever been sick with a cold or the flu you know that a simple cold, cough, or sore throat can affect your entire body. Worse yet, have you ever had a case of food poisoning? Several years ago, I had a terrible bout with this dreadful condition. I was so sick that I was scared I was going to die and then when I didn't, I wished I had. This little bug didn't just affect my stomach, it affected my whole body. I ached from the tip of my head to the bottom of my feet. I experienced chills. I ran a fever. I was in flat-out agony. When one part of your body suffers, the whole body is brought down.

Paul took the theme of mutual care one step further. As members of the same body we are so closely bound together that we actually share the same feelings. What causes joy for one member delights the whole body. When one member suffers the entire body hurts. Most of us do a better job empathizing with those who suffer than we do rejoicing with those who are honored. If we could ever come to the conviction that we are truly family, it would change many of our attitudes about ourselves and others in the church. I know that I receive greater joy in seeing my children achieve than in my own achievements. If we are family, why is it so difficult to see another member of our own body receive honor? Our measure for evaluating our gifted self-images is not another body member, but our faithfulness in employing our unique gift for the good of the family itself.¹⁸ We must desperately yearn for the success of others.

[Now that we have done away with spiritual inferiority and superiority complexes, we are ready to...]

4. Celebrate the diversity of the body (12:27-31). Paul takes the analogy of the physical body and applies it practically in terms of gifting and how ministry is to be expressed. In 12:27-28, Paul writes, **“Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it. 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.”** Paul lists eight kinds of members with special functions.¹⁹ The ranking of the first three items corresponds to their building up the local church. We will briefly discuss these definitions.²⁰

- **Apostles:** As a spiritual gift, this is the ability to begin and/or to oversee new churches and Christian ministries with a spontaneously recognized authority.²¹
- **Prophets:** The ability to receive and proclaim a message from God. This could involve the foretelling of future events, though its primary purpose as seen in 1 Cor 14:3 is forthtelling: “One who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.” This gift provides a word from God to a specific group, not the normative Word of God to all believers.
- **Teachers:** The ability to clearly explain and effectively apply the truths of God's Word so that others will learn. This requires the capacity to accurately interpret Scripture, engage in necessary research, and organize the results in a way that is easily communicated.

- **Miracles:** The ability to serve as an instrument through whom God accomplishes acts that manifest supernatural power. Miracles bear witness to the presence of God and the truth of His proclaimed Word, and appear to occur most frequently in association with missionary activity.
- **Gifts of healings:** The ability to serve as a human instrument through whom God supernaturally cures illnesses and restores health. The possessor of this gift is not the source of power, but a vessel who can only heal those diseases the Lord chooses to heal. Inner healing, or healing of memories is sometimes associated as another manifestation of this gift.
- **Gifts of helps:** The ability to enhance the effectiveness of the ministry of other members of the body. This is the only usage of this word in the New Testament, and it appears to be distinct from the gift of service. Some suggest that while the gift of service is more group-oriented, the gift of helps is more person-oriented.
- **Gifts of administrations:** This word, like helps, appears only one time in the New Testament, and it is used outside of Scripture of a helmsman who steers a ship to its destination. This suggests that the spiritual gift of administration is the ability to steer a church or Christian organization toward the fulfillment of its goals by managing its affairs and implementing necessary plans. A person may have the gift of leadership without the gift of administration.
- **Various kinds of tongues:** The ability to receive and impart a spiritual message in a language the recipient never learned.

Why does Paul include two lists in a single chapter? The two lists are critical to Paul's broadened understanding of spiritual gifts. The first list enumerated only the prized gifts of the Corinthians, the miraculous ones. In the second list, Paul literally pulled the top and the bottom out of the first list and expanded the accepted definitions of spiritual gifts. He added leadership abilities and service abilities.²² God's expectation is that every Christian will serve in the local church. Yet, someone may say, "I am an inactive Christian." There is no such thing. That is like saying, "I am an honest thief" or "I am a godly prostitute." An inactive Christian is a paradox in terms. No Christian is without a special, supernatural gift from God. Inactive Christians are about as good as a bump on a pickle. There is no such animal as an inactive Christian biblically.²³

Paul prepares to close out this passage with a third list of gifts in a descending order of priority. Each of Paul's seven questions expects a negative answer.²⁴ Paul writes, "**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?**" Paul's point is that it would be ridiculous for everyone to have the same gift. Variety is essential. It is wrong to equate one gift, particularly speaking in tongues, with spirituality. All of the believers in the Corinthian church had been baptized by the Spirit (12:13), but not all of them spoke in tongues (12:30). Thus, Paul deals a deathblow to the theory that speaking in tongues is the sign of the possession of the Spirit, for the answer "No" is expected to each question.²⁵

Paul's final words are found in 12:31: "**But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.**" The command to "earnestly desire the best gifts" is not addressed to the individual but to the collective church. The implied "you" is second person plural in the Greek. We cannot select our gifts because that is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit. However, as a congregation we can "earnestly desire" that the "best gifts" (superlative gifts) be manifested among us. The "best gifts" are those that benefit the general body of Christ. In chapter 14 Paul lists "prophecy" as a greater gift.

Paul advised the Corinthians to seek some gifts more than others because some are more significant in the functioning of the body than others. While the bestowal of gifts is the sovereign prerogative of the Spirit (12:8-11, 18), human desire plays a part in His bestowal (cf. Jas 4:2). This seems to indicate that the Spirit does not give all His gifts to us at the moment of our salvation. I see nothing in Scripture that prohibits our viewing the abilities God gives us at birth as part of His spiritual gifts. Likewise, a believer can receive a gift or an opportunity for service or the Spirit's blessing on his ministry years after his conversion. Everything we have or ever will have is a gift from God.²⁶

My three children like certain types of food. If I am scooping them a bowl of ice cream or cutting them a piece of cake, they always ask for more before they have even begun to consume what I have served. My response is always the same: "Before I give you more, you need to eat what you have." In the same way, before we can expect God to give us more gifts or use us more fully, we must serve with what we have.

I want you to imagine a large puzzle, say, one with about 500 pieces that we are going to attempt to put together. As with every challenging jigsaw puzzle, each piece is different in shape and often in color. Furthermore, every piece is needed in order to finish the puzzle, and there are no extra pieces. If we weren't certain of that we wouldn't even start the puzzle. Who needs that level of frustration? Each piece, of course, fits in only one place. If we try to force it into a place where it doesn't fit, the corners get bent and then another piece is prevented from taking its rightful spot.

Our church is very much like this jigsaw puzzle. There are over 500 individuals who call EBF their church home. Each one has unique talents, abilities, and spiritual gifts. Furthermore, every one of them is vital to the big picture, to the proper functioning of this church—there are no *spare*s or *extra*s. If one person tries to do something that someone else is better suited to do, we end up with two people out of place.²⁷ This means we all need to discover our spiritual gift and serve in the most fruitful way possible. *Everybody is somebody because we're in this together.*

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Scripture Reference

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

1 Corinthians 4:8-13

Ephesians 2:11-22; 4:1-6

Colossians 1:24-29

2 Corinthians 4:7-10; 12:7-10

Study Questions

1. Am I insecure in the use of my gifts (12:14-20)? Am I envious of other people's gifts and talents? How can I seek to be content in the gift(s) God has given me?
2. Is our church a giant eyeball (12:17-20)? How can a variety of gifts be better expressed? What gifts has God given to our congregation? How might we make better use of them? What role can I play in this pursuit?
3. Am I arrogant in the gifts that God has given me (12:21-26)? Do I look down on others that have different gifts than I do? Have I confessed my pride in this area? How can I grow to value and appreciate members of the body that have different gifts than I do?
4. When have I recently grieved with a hurting brother or sister (12:26)? What was the response of this person? How did I express my love and care? What would I do differently next time? Read Romans 12:15 and Galatians 6:2.
5. How should we understand the remarkable spiritual experiences that many Christians have today (12:27-30)? What kind of attitude should we have toward them? If I am uncomfortable with the exercise of the more controversial gifts (e.g., tongues, miracles, etc.) how can I still express love and respect for my Charismatic brothers and sisters? In what way(s) can I learn from them?
6. The question is not, "What is the church doing for me?" The question is, "What can I contribute to the church to participate in its fulfillment of its mission and calling?" Is this my mindset? What can I do to eradicate my consumer mentality? How can I function as a member of the body?

Notes

¹ Dr. Bob Utley, “1-2 Corinthians”: <http://www.freebiblecommentary.org/pdf/VOL06.pdf>.

² In 1 Cor 12:12-26, Paul develops the extended metaphor of the church as the body of Christ. An ABBA pattern is discernible as he follows up an initial statement of the metaphor (12:12) by moving from the theme of unity (12:13) to diversity (12:14), and then describes in more detail first diversity (12:15-21) and then unity (12:22-26). Craig L. Blomberg, *1 Corinthians: NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 245.

³ “For” (*gar*) introduces 1 Cor 12:12-31 to illustrate and apply the principle of variety in unity which is emphasized in 12:4-11. The metaphor is that of the human frame, a unit consisting of many components which operate together. In 10:17 and 11:29 (cf. 6:15), Paul reasoned that the church is one, and now he expounds the truth.

⁴ Charles R. Swindoll, *Growing Deep in the Christian Life* (Portland: Multnomah, 1986), 343.

⁵ Only Paul employs the “body” imagery, but he does so frequently in his Epistles: Rom 12:4-5; Eph 1:23; 2:16; 3:6; 4:4; 5:23; Col 1:18, 24; 2:19; 3:5. Bob Deffinbaugh, “Spirituality and Spiritual Gifts: Part 3” (1 Cor 12:12-31).

⁶ Thiselton correctly states, “Any theology that might imply that this one baptism in 13a in which believers were ‘baptized by [or in] one Spirit’ might mark off some post conversion experience or status enjoyed only by some Christians attacks and undermines Paul’s entire argument and emphasis. Paul’s constant use of *en*, ‘one,’ and *pantes*, ‘all,’ constitutes a direct onslaught against categorization or elitism within the church.” Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 998.

⁷ In the first-century Roman world, the equality found in the church was much more significant than it is today. In those days there was nobility and there was slavery. There was the slave owner and the slave. A sign of good health and a local church is the absence of favoritism, status, and prejudice. In any of their earthly organization, when you draw together a number of human beings, you’re going to have prejudice, emphasis on status, and a display of favoritism. But not in the body of Christ! This is one place that has no room for “preferred customers” or “second-class citizens.” Swindoll, *Growing Deep in the Christian Life*, 344.

⁸ Both “baptized” (*ebaptisthemen*) and “drank” (*epotisthemen*) are aorist passive indicatives, which imply a finished work in past time.

⁹ This is probably a case of Semitic parallelism in which both clauses make essentially the same point. Thomas L. Constable: *Notes on 1 Corinthians*: 2007 edition: <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/1corinthians.pdf>, 135.

¹⁰ Verlyn D. Verbrugge, “1 Corinthians” in the *Revised Expositors Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, forthcoming).

¹¹ Andy Holmes, *Growing with Jesus* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 69.

¹² See Grant Richison, “1 Corinthians”: <http://versebyversecommentary.com/2002/12/03/1-corinthians-1216-17>.

¹³ Swindoll, *Growing Deep in the Christian Life*, 345.

¹⁴ I am not sure why the translators of the NASB failed to use the same English word to translate the identical Greek term (*thelo*) in 12:18 (“has placed”) and 12:28 (“has appointed”).

¹⁵ Cf. 1 Cor 1:29; 3:3-4; 4:18-19; 5:1, 6; 11:18-22.

¹⁶ Verbrugge, “1 Corinthians.”

¹⁷ The underlying Greek word *aschemon* (“less presentable”) is used with reference to sexual life in Gen 34:7 and Deut 24:1, and the reference here seems to be to the sexual organs (i.e., the private parts). Sex organs are not shameful but the display of them is. Most likely, these phrases refer to the genitals, those parts of the body that we do not present to the public. Yet, these parts are most certainly necessary to human life; think of the disaster that would take place without the ability to urinate or defecate. They are also essential to survival. While we can exist without an arm or a leg, we cannot exist for long if those private parts ceased to function. They are indeed necessary. Moreover, the fact that we protect them with clothing shows how much we honor them. Verbrugge, “1 Corinthians,” Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 595.

¹⁸ Ken Hemphill, *Mirror, Mirror on the Wall* (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 65.

¹⁹ This list differs somewhat from the one in 12:8-10 where he identified nine manifestations of the Spirit’s working. This list, as the former one, is selective rather than exhaustive.

²⁰ I have benefited from some of the insights of Ken Boa, “The Gifts of the Spirit”: <http://www.kenboa.org/downloads/pdf/SpiritualGifts.pdf>.

²¹ In the NT, the apostles were not limited to the Twelve, but included Paul, Barnabas, Andronicus, Junias, and others as well (Acts 14:14; Rom 16:7; 1 Cor 15:5, 7; 1 Thess 2:6). If the requirement for the office of apostle includes having seen the resurrected Jesus (Acts 1:22 and 1 Cor 9:1) this office ceased to exist by the second century.

²² Hemphill, *Mirror, Mirror on the Wall*, 67.

²³ Richison, "1 Corinthians": <http://versebyversecommentary.com/2002/12/09/1-corinthians-1228>.

²⁴ Questions that are introduced with the Greek particle *me* ("not") indicate the expectation of a negative answer.

²⁵ This is important passage in refuting the theological overstatement fact "tongues" is a gift for every believer, a sort of confirming sign of salvation and/or a special mark of true spirituality. It is a valid gift, but not for everyone. The other extreme is to reject "tongues" as passing away in the apostolic era. This is also a theological overstatement. See especially 1 Cor 14:39. Utley, "1-2 Corinthians."

²⁶ Constable, *Notes on 1 Corinthians*, 139.

²⁷ Michael P. Andrus, "A Body Has No Spare Parts" (1 Cor 12:12-27): unpublished sermon notes.