

Jeff Corinthians 14

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 25 November 2025

Preacher: Jeff Purswell

[0:00] Let me say a couple of things about 12 to 14. First of all, now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.

! So what is Paul doing? He's taking up what? Yeah, he's dealing with an issue that they probably raised up, right? Now concerning spiritual gifts.

So he's answering one of their questions. And like chapters 8 to 10 were one unit, well chapters 12 to 14 are one unit.

And these three chapters nicely illustrate what's recognized as a common way Paul puts forth arguments in especially 1 Corinthians.

And we'll call it the ABA, an ABA form of argument.

[1:06] And so in the A part of the argument, Paul will deal with an issue in a very general way. So general, a general overview of a situation.

B, the B part of his argument is where he goes on what seems to be a digression. It seems like he leaves the subject at hand and goes on a seeming, and I'm putting it into quotes, a seeming digression.

But as it turns out, that digression lays the theological foundation for the issue at hand. Then the ABA, this A prime, Paul returns and then deals with the specific issue.

Okay? Paul does this again and again and again in this particular letter.

We actually would have seen, I didn't go into this in chapters 8, but food sacrificed to idols. And so chapters 8 is the general answer of food sacrificed to idols dealing with knowledge and love.

[2:31] Chapter 9 is a digression that goes into Paul's apostolic defense, but it illustrates the issue. And then chapter 10, Paul comes back and deals specifically with what's really at stake here.

Eating in pagan temples. That's the real issue. We actually could see this in chapters 1 to 3. Paul brings up the issue of divisions. And so from chapter 1, verse 10 to about chapter 2, 5, Paul deals generally.

He generally with the divisions, expounding the cross as the center of the gospel. And then Paul goes on something of a digression in chapter 2, verse 6 and following, where this digression onto the spirit's role in revealing wisdom.

Yet the spirit is central to what it means to be a Christian. And then in chapter 3, Paul deals specifically with the issue at hand, the nature of leaders. So in this portion of the book, the pattern is clearly seen.

Here's what Paul does. Chapter 12, Paul deals with the issue of spiritual gifts generally. Now concerning spiritual gifts, I don't want you to be uninformed.

[3:53] And he goes on. Now there are varieties of gifts. Each one has a gift. Each gift is a manifestation of the spirit. There's all these different gifts. So Paul just gives a general overview of spiritual gifts.

Then in chapter 13, he starts talking about love. Wait a minute, Paul. I thought we were talking about spiritual gifts. So it seems to be a digression, but it's really not.

It's a theological foundation. Gifts are really nothing. It's all about love. And then he comes back in chapter 14 and deals with a specific issue at hand. And what is the specific issue at hand?

The Corinthians abuse of the gift of tongues, basically. You understand? That's the structure of Paul's argument here.

I put on your outline sort of a number of points about this. This is a very important, very illuminating text for pastors because the local church is in view here.

[5:02] The gathered church is in view here. Chapters 12 to 14 is not a theological treatise on the Holy Spirit. But it deals with the Holy Spirit in his particular role of empowering the people of God and giving gifts that are utilized among the people of God.

So it's a very illuminating thing. And so let me just walk through quickly what I have on your outline. The way I'm framing this is what pastoral priorities can a pastor glean from these chapters about the Spirit and about the gathered church.

And so you see the first one there, the priority of the gospel? The priority of the gospel. That's the foundational thing. Verses 1 to 3. Usually we skip over these verses. Let's get to the gifts. But that's a mistake. Verses 1 to 3 of chapter 12 are important preparation for the rest of the article. And they set an important trajectory to the article.

Look at verse 1. Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led.

[6:24] Therefore, 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. So here as he's done throughout much of 1 Corinthians, he's taking up an issue raised by them.

And when it says spiritual gifts there, it's not the word spiritual gifts. It is, it is, the word is pneumaticone.

Pneumaticone. Now concerning pneumaticone. What does he mean? Now concerning what? Now concerning what? We don't know if this is gender or masculine, do we?

Cone. Could be gender. Spiritual things. Could be people. Now concerning spiritual people. I think, given the context, I think what he's, what is in view is spiritual manifestations.

Spiritual manifestations. Like tongues. Like prophecy. Especially verbal ones. I think that's what he's dealing with. But before, now concerning spiritual things.

[7:55] And then he goes, I want you to know that you were pagans. You were led astray. But now no one speaking of the spirit of God ever says Jesus is accursed. What he does is, and by the way, I don't think anyone in Corinth is saying Jesus is accursed.

Pop always scares me. That would be a much, draw a much more scathing rebuke. Nor do I think Paul is laying down criteria for determining true or false spiritual utterances.

Think about how, what he does, he begins by talking about their former pagan life. And he contrasts two confessions.

Jesus is accursed, and Jesus is Lord. Right? I don't think he's laying down criteria for spiritual utterances. Again, chapter 12, the way it unfolds, Paul is about to argue that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to every believer.

That's what he's going to say in chapter, in verses four and following. So, in these verses, he prepares the way for that idea by making clear just who it is that has the spirit in the first place.

[9:13] Do you see? So, first of all, they certainly didn't have the spirit in their pagan days, verse two. So, concerning spiritual manifestations or gifts, however you want to say it, I don't want you being informed.

I'm going to tell you about who's got the spirit. Well, when you were pagans, you were led astray. You didn't. Nor does anyone who says Jesus is accursed, verse three.

No one speaking in the spirit of God ever says Jesus is accursed. Who would say that? Who in the world would say, in a setting like this, Jesus is accursed?

What does Galatians three say? Quoting Deuteronomy? Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree. Jews would say Jesus is accursed.

You see what Paul's doing? So, unlike pagans, and unlike Jewish opponents, it's those who confess Jesus is Lord who has the spirit. You see what he's doing?

[10:34] He's putting the whole spiritual gift discussion on the foundation of the gospel. We're going to talk about spiritual manifestations and gifts, but let me tell you what.

It's those who know Jesus Christ, they're the ones who have the spirit. That's the most important thing. So, it's all grounded on the gospel. So, here Paul introduces a key theme in this whole

section.

All genuine Christians possess the spirit. All Christians are spiritual. Everyone who confesses Jesus Christ, not merely by uttering words, but by making a saving confession.

That's what he has in view. Not just, oh, someone said it. No, they make a saving confession. In other words, they identify with Jesus in the midst of a fallen world. They have turned from their sin. They've turned with their whole existence from sin to God. Everyone who does that, that's the person who's spiritual. Because that can only be done by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. [11:44] And anyone who does that, they're spiritual. Regardless of how, whether, you know, you think you're really spiritual because you're speaking in tongues. You think you're really spiritual because you have all the great gifts.

No, everyone who does that, who turns to Jesus Christ, that's the spiritual person. That's the true mark of having the Spirit. And anyone who generally does that is living in the sphere of the Spirit's power.

And so, to these vaunted Corinthians who exalted spiritual utterances, many of whom, it appears, indulged in proud displays of spirituality, Paul is basically saying, wait a minute, let me tell you who's truly spiritual.

Let me give you the most powerful, the most fundamental work of the Spirit in a person's life.

What's the most spiritual, the most powerful thing anybody can do?

Get saved. A saving confession of Jesus can only be made under the inspiration of the Spirit. And anyone who makes that confession, whose life is marked by that allegiance, that person is by definition living in the power of the Holy Spirit.

[13:06] So, Paul begins then, not with gifts, but with a question. Who's really spiritual? Let's create the category of spirituality.

spirituality. And in so doing, he exalts the gospel. And he tells us something about the whole category of spiritual experiences.

The most powerful spiritual experience we could ever have is the miracle of regeneration. The greatest miracle you will ever experience you've already had.

The miracle of regeneration. A fallen, depraved heart made alive? A spiritual resurrection that one day will usher in a physical one?

That is power. power. So, at the outset of Paul's treatment of spiritual gifts, he provides us with some vital theological guidance.

[14:11] Our pneumatology must, to use theological terms, our pneumatology must never be isolated from our Christology. We must never think about spirit, spiritual gifts, spiritual phenomena apart from Jesus Christ.

Okay? That's the first priority. Priority of the gospel. The second priority that we see in the text, the priority of variety. Verses 4 to 11. So, after providing a criteria for what it means to be spiritual, Paul now lays the foundation for an understanding of spiritual gifts.

So, he's dealing with spiritual gifts generally, he'll get the tongues, but he's dealing with them generally now, laying important groundwork. And there's no more important framework for spiritual gifts than what Paul says right here.

Look at verse 4. Now, there are varieties of gifts, but the same spirit. There are varieties of service, but the same Lord. There are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them in everyone.

Look at, note the threefold repetition of varieties. It's hard to miss his emphasis. There are varieties of gifts. There are varieties of service. There are varieties of activities.

[15:36] So, what's his point? The point is, the first take home is, the work of the Holy Spirit is broad, embracing all of life. Paul is at pains here to broaden the Corinthians' perspective perspective on the work of the Spirit.

He doesn't want them infatuated with tongues or healing or any narrow, narrow band of gifts. He's wanting to say, guys, the Spirit does all of this stuff.

Varieties. varieties. They say, they focus on tongues, Paul says varieties. Varieties of gifts, varieties of service, varieties of activities. Which of those are empowered by the Spirit?

All of them. Everyone. And then Paul sums it up in verse 7, which I think you could basically say is the theme of the whole chapter.

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. And note, there's a shift in terminology here.

[16:43] To each, verse 7, each is emphatic. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit. This is an important move.

Look at the vocabulary. manifestation of the Spirit. So this word now serves as an umbrella for all that the Spirit does.

And by using it, Paul demolishes the distinctions between the gifts. In other words, whether it's prophecy in tongues or miracles or teaching or leading or mercy or serving or administration, they're all manifestations of the Spirit.

The Spirit is at work in all of them. Christ is glorified in all of them. So Paul is giving the Corinthians a new lens for discerning the Spirit's work.

It's not confined to certain spectacular gifts where God's power is more immediately apparent. And as I think I put on your outline, Scripture makes no distinction between natural and supernatural gifts.

[18:00] All the gifts are from God. All the gifts are empowered by the Spirit. All the gifts are vital for the edification of the church. There's no denigration of any gift. There's no exaltation of any gift as being more spiritual or being more indicative of a greater level of spirituality or power.

there are no non-spectacular gifts. There are no non-impressive gifts.

There are only unappreciated gifts. And as a pastor it's important because if you draw a distinction in your mind between natural gifts and supernatural gifts you will inevitably begin to value some gifts more highly.

and some gifts more importantly. And you will at the same time devalue certain gifts as being less spiritual, less impressive, less evidently from God and less important in the church.

When we demolish, when Paul demolishes that barrier between natural and supernatural it frees us to value all the gifts. It frees us to be grateful to God for all the gifts.

[19:13] It frees us to see God at work in all the gifts. And for people are people who live most of them live with a sense of inadequacy.

Most people in most churches I would say just they consider themselves I'm not important I'm ungifted. no.

I want to be intentional in broadening their view of the Spirit just like Paul did. I want to draw their attention to where God is at work in their lives. Think about people in your church who are just they're quiet they're behind the scenes they're servants.

But my goodness if they did not do what they did forget about it. In other words so much wouldn't happen because of those servants right? I want to commend those people and value those people. And if they say to me no it's not the Spirit it's just me I want to go it's not just you. Apart from the Spirit you're selfish. Apart from the Spirit you're lost.

[20:24] Apart from the Spirit you wouldn't be giving your life away. It's not just you. It's the Spirit. He's made you a servant. Praise God. And so I love as a pastor to honor and convince humble people in our church how valuable they are to the church.

So that's the second the second value there the priority of variety. And you know we won't go through the whole argument but you know Paul goes on to say the body is one has many members we were all baptized by the Spirit into one body so it is with Christ the body does not consist in one member but many.

In other words it takes all of us to constitute the body of Christ. And so the eye can't say to the hand I don't need you. So the proud person can't say I don't need you.

But the foot can't say to the I forget which hand what does he say? Yeah the foot the foot can't say well I'm not a hand I do not belong.

In other words the really gifted person can't say I don't need you and another person can't say oh you don't need me. No we need everyone. That's the argument basically. Now let's go on to the third priority the priority of love.

[21:51] Now we can't linger here too long because you you know this chapter but if Paul were here you know what he'd probably say Jeff I rebuke you for saying we can't linger too long on chapter 13 because it's the most important thing.

So spend more time here. I think that's what he might say. But Paul you know launches off here and waxes eloquent and I mean he really does. he unleashes the power of his imagination and his vocabulary and his moral vision.

But his argumentation strategy is brilliant here. He again he seems to digress but but what he says in chapter 13 is actually at the core of his argument.

It's a theological foundation for everything. And of course as we all know we often we think of this chapter in isolation. We use it at weddings and we put it we frame it and put it on a wall.

And that's fine. It is a commentators will call this a a pison of of praise an encomium of in praise of charity and praise of love.

[23:12] And it is it is lofty and it can't stand on its own. But we got to remember Paul is not just praising love. Paul is critiquing the Corinthians. I mean chapter 13 is a slap down.

He is slapping them down. This is a vision of life aimed aimed right at the problems of the Corinthians. In the point that he's making the basic point if you had to sum up chapter 13 basically says if you have all the gifts even if you have all the gifts and do all the great deeds if you don't have love you're zero.

You're nothing. That's the basic point. In other words spiritual gifts and even even heroic displays of of self-sacrifice are of no value and say nothing about your spiritual condition.

if you don't have love. In other words the key factor that tells me something about your spiritual condition is not your gifts it's not your ministry it's your love.

That's the that's the only thing that validates your gifts. That's chapter 13. The next priority this leads to the fourth one and this is not I want to say not a primary emphasis of the text but I do want to mention it because it's so often overlooked and that is the priority of pursuit.

[24:55] And it is remarkable that in a context where Paul is correcting a church for charismatic abuses he still commands that the gifts be eagerly desired.

even chapter 14 verse 1 pneumatika pursue love and earnestly desire pneumatika which if I read this right probably means speech gifts or involves speech gifts.

This is what the Corinthians asked about in chapter 12 verse 1. Let me show you one thing that we overlook but I just want to show you something that Paul does.

Now concerning pneumatikone that's what they're asking about spiritual things spiritual people I think spiritual manifestations is probably it. it's not the word for spiritual gifts.

Now if you want to translate spiritual gifts that's okay but look at what Paul does now and then he goes off on this gospel and then look what he says now there are a variety of gifts but the same spirit varieties of service varieties of activities.

[26:18] You know what word he uses in verse 4? Charismata spiritual gifts. We often hear that the word charisma or gift because it's linked with the word charis which means what?

Grace. So therefore a charisma is an expression of grace because because charismata comes from charis.

That is not that is not right. Charisma or charismata does not come from charis grace it comes from charizomai which is a verb that means to give freely.

So when Paul uses charismata here gifts it's not the word grace is not involved what it means what's being emphasized is something is being given freely generously we don't deserve it it's just now it's that's linked with the idea of grace but the emphasis here is on something that's just given freely gifts given freely and so you see what Paul does is he changes the vocabulary around them they ask about pneumatikone Paul says they're varieties of gifts they ask about pneumatikone spiritual manifestations Paul says let me I'm not going to talk to you about spiritual manifestations yet I'm going to talk to you about gifts that are given freely to you undeservedly to you generously to you they ask about pneumatikone spiritual things Paul asks about freely given things gifts you don't deserve it's a brilliant move even though back to chapter 14 verse 1 he says earnestly desire these

things too as long as you have chapter 13 in place as long as you have love in place then go for it so with all the cautions this section gives us and requirements that this section gives us we don't want to ignore the fact that scripture commands the eager pursuit of spiritual gifts and he actually says it twice 1231 earnestly desire the higher gifts 141 earnestly desire the spiritual gifts it's simply stunning that in the midst of this flagrant abuse of these things

Paul still says pursue them and the term is the same in both it's a strong it's a strong verb in the present tense it's zelao to be zealous for or jealous for or to earnestly desire strive after be zealous about it so I think would say as continuationists biblically we simply don't have the option of merely acknowledging the gifts we don't have the option of affirming them from a distance you know there's one category that you often hear it comes from a book four views on spiritual gifts but now it's a very broad category well I'm open but cautious I'm not even sure that's biblical I think a better term and

[29:58] Graham Cole in his book he who gives life says and he's actually continuationist but not a he says open but discerning and I think that's better but we're commanded to have an attitude here the Bible commands not just orthodox belief the Bible commands not only sound practice the Bible commands attitudes also and the attitude here is a desire for God to be at work by his spirit in my life for the good of others because we want to see others because we love people and we want to see them blessed by God and we love God and we want to see him glorified finally the fifth priority and this is really important especially in chapter 14 the priority of edification so in chapter 14

Paul enters the third stage of his argument moving from general his digression on love and now he gets to the real issue in mind which is basically the Corinthians abuse of tongues in public worship and please note the issue he's critiquing is not tongues per se he's not critiquing the gift of tongues he's critiquing their exaltation of tongues and particularly their misuse of uninterpreted tongues in the congregation edification I want you to notice in chapter 14 verse 3 when he's talking about prophecy on the other hand the one who prophesies speaks to people for their up building encouragement and consolation you see that word up building could be translated edification that's oikadame this term in its various forms occurred eight times in 1

Corinthians 14 1 to 13 eight times in this chapter it comes seven times in one chapter in here it is the dominant theme of chapter 14 so pursue love earnestly desire to spiritual gifts especially that men prophesy for when he speaks in the tongue speaks not to men but to God no one understands him he utters mysteries in the spirit on the other hand the one who speaks the one who prophesies speaks to people for their up building and encouragement and consolation the one who speaks in the tongue edifies builds up himself the one who prophesies edifies builds up the church now I want you all to speak in tongues but even more to prophesy the one who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues unless someone interprets so that the church may be what built up you see built up built up built up chapter 14 verse 12 so with yourselves since you are eager for manifestations of the spirit strive to excel in building up the church verse 17 you may be well enough with tongues but the other person is not being built up verse 26 what then brothers when you come together each one has a hymn a lesson a revelation a tongue let all things be done for building up for edification so that is Paul's think about your Sunday meeting think about the gathered church this is

Paul's unmistakable priority for the gathered church whatever you do on a Sunday whatever gifts are expressed whatever experiences to be had the one overriding priority for everything is edification that is striking to me his priority is not the perfect flawless execution of our worship plan the personal his priority is not the maximum expression of spiritual gifts his priority is not let's make sure we have certain gifts the powerful ones no the priority is edification so as you guys on Tuesday were planning thinking about Sunday meeting it's wonderful to participate over all of our plans over all of our agenda over every time allocation must be first first 1031 how can God be glorified edified and then as a means to that how can the church be edified what will most contribute to edification and that is Paul's concern that's why he redirects them to prophecy over uninterpreted tongues prophecy is commended because of its potential to edify the gathered church tongues edifies the individual that's the primary functional distinction between the gifts and that's why Paul prefers prophecy in the gathered assembly and just parenthetically the comment that

tongues edify the individual is not derogatory he's not criticizing tongues it is a gift verse 14 through 17 it's equated with prayer and praise

[35:46] Paul in verse 18 is going to thank God for his abundant experience of his gifts but in the assembly as verse 5 makes clear prophecy is the greater gift and it's greater to the extent that it builds up the gathering as a whole that's what makes a gift greater is it builds up the gathering and again let me just remind you Paul is dealing with a question of the Corinthians and a particular situation this is not exalting prophecy over the priest's word think about our first session on Tuesday preach the word preach the doctrine preach the word preach the word preach the word Timothy preach the word he doesn't tell Timothy get the spiritual gifts going Timothy make sure you're prophesying Timothy make sure everyone's speaking in tongues no preach the word

Paul is dealing with a particular situation they are abusing gifts speech gifts and so Paul is diverting them no not tongues but prophecy because some were definitely prophesying we saw women prophesying in chapter 11 but he's saying no prophecy is better because it has more potential to edify so he's not saying prophecy is the ultimate priority he's saying prophecy is superior to tongues because it edifies now one thing I also want to point out here Paul gives us another guideline to help us know just what it is that edifies in other words there is a necessary condition for edification what is that necessary condition it is intelligibility intelligibility again that's why prophecy is superior to tongues and Paul expands on this idea in verses 6 to 12 in fact this is critical in verse 6 Paul lists four gifts that are superior to tongues in their edifying potential which again illustrates Paul's burden it's not that prophecy is the supreme gift that must be exercised at all costs brothers if I come to you speaking in tongues how will I benefit you unless I bring some revelation in other words some spirit inspired intelligible speech gift or knowledge or prophecy or teaching so there's a number of gifts that benefit the gathered church and don't miss the fact that knowledge and teaching are on this list and again if we brought all the this isn't all the Bible says about our Sunday gatherings God's word is our authority and nowhere is God more at work than in his word to reveal himself there's nowhere that God more fully or clearly or authoritative speaks nothing should displace the centrality of the word in our gatherings that is absolutely vital so again Paul is addressing a particular situation but he identifies those gifts because they are intelligible and because they're intelligible in other words people can understand them therefore they can build up and let me just say this intelligibility is a wonderful standard to use for all of your Sunday meetings in other words if you have non-believers come in you want them this isn't being seeker sensitive in other words catering to their preferences but you are sensitive to them in that you don't want to do things that they come in and think what in the world is going on and so we we explain things in our meetings sometimes we don't want people to feel it's not I don't mind if they feel that something different is here I want them to feel that

I want them to feel the fear of God but what I don't want them to do is think this is nuts this is crazy I don't understand what's going on that's what he's dealing with in chapter 14 verses 23 therefore if the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues and outsiders or unbelievers enter will they not say that you are out of your mind but if all prophesy and an unbeliever or outsider enters he is convicted by all he is called to account by all the secrets of his heart are disclosed and so falling on his face he will worship God and declare that God is really among you so if he thinks you're crazy if he thinks it's bizarre if he doesn't know what's going on then what's happening is he's being separated from what's going on he's being separated from the proclamation of the gospel we don't want people we want people to just to understand what's going on so he has encouraged gifts he envisions

[41:23] God's spirit making God's presence powerfully known but none of that is licensed for chaos or man centered worship and to guard against this Paul gives us something of a pattern for our gatherings what's the ultimate pattern for our gatherings verse 33 it's the character of God it's the character of God for God is not a God of confusion but of peace so in other words Christian worship is to reflect the nature of the God we worship unlike the frenzied worship of the pagan deities that surrounded Corinth their worship was to be different their worship was to

reflect the God of peace the God of all comfort the great and awesome God who lives forever whose name is holy the king of kings and lord of lords who alone has immortality who dwells in unapproachable light whom no one has seen or can see fill out the character of

God all right chapter 15 real quick I'm going to get through this book because Michael told me or Josh told me that Sammy was demanding that I get through the book chapter 15 it might seem on the surface that Paul takes an abrupt turn with the resurrection there is a change in subject but the topic is related to the types of things Paul has dealt with already we know that some of the denying the resurrection verse 12 verse 12 now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead how can some of you say there is no resurrection from the dead so some of them are saying this so it's yet another issue Paul has heard about we could sum up the issue in this chapter like this and I just I just wrote this down this is basically the issue of the chapter Paul basically says this given that you believed in the resurrection of Christ that's verses 1 and 2 and verse 11 given that you believed in the resurrection of Christ how is it that some of you are denying the future the future bodily resurrection of believers that's the chapter that's the chapter you know that Christ was raised you know that Christ was raised we're going to be raised too and I give you an analysis of the chapter in your notes that hopefully will be helpful verses 1 to 34 verses 1 to 34 is the fact of the resurrection so in the first half of the chapter Paul argues for for the fact of it the fact of it he begins by with an affirmation of the agreed upon premise so I deliver to you as a first importance he's reminding them of the gospel that he preached so he's common ground Paul always begins with areas of agreement and then he draws out a conclusion from that premise now if Christ is so basically first first 11 verses I preached the gospel to you and in that gospel Christ was raised right and so verse 12 now if Christ is proclaimed as raised then how can you say that we're not going to be raised then how can you say that we're not going to be raised?

You see? That's the argument. And then he develops this by saying, if we are not raised, if we're not raised, then Christ is not raised. That's the result of denying that.

But if there's no resurrection of the dead, if you're saying we're not going to be raised, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then forget about it. Go to the club.

Our preaching is in vain. Your faith is in vain. So you see what he does. You're saying that we're not going to be raised.

[46:00] Well, if you're saying we're not going to be raised, that means Christ is not raised. If Christ is not raised, then it's all over.

There's no gospel. Then Paul makes some further arguments.

Verses 29 and following. Further arguments. Well, actually, I skipped over something. The next step is to show the results of accepting the conclusion.

So if Christ has been raised, then, because, okay, I know you don't want to deny that, well, then, that means believers will also be raised. So Christ is the first fruits. But if, in fact, verse 20, in fact Christ has been raised, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

So Christ has been raised, and his function in being raised is to be the first. And our resurrection is going to follow in the wake of his at the end.

Now, look at verse 29. Here is where Paul makes some further arguments against their position. resurrection. And it basically shows that if they are right, in other words, if there is no resurrection, then their life, things that they're doing are absurd.

[47:18] Things they're doing make no sense. In other words, if there's no resurrection, then why carry on doing what you're doing? Why preach the gospel? Why carry on the work of the church? Your very actions show that there's going to be a resurrection.

And if there's no resurrection, then why do the church thing? Why do all these other things? So otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead?

If the dead are not raised at all, why are they being baptized on their behalf? Why am I in danger every hour? I mean, why am I undergoing all these sufferings? What do I gain by all this stuff?

Now, on the baptism of the dead, just note one thing. Paul is not teaching the baptism of the dead. He's not even agreeing with it. He's not assuming it.

He's saying, otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? On behalf of the dead, if the dead are not raised, why are people doing that? So this is happening.

[48:30] And Paul is saying, this is nonsense if there's no resurrection. So this activity of yours. So he's not teaching it. He's not even commending it.

He's just saying, you're doing this baptism for the dead thing, and if people aren't raised, well, then why are you doing it? People were probably had hope that maybe perhaps there were people who were Christians who passed away before they were baptized, and so they were baptizing, undergoing a ritual baptism on behalf of those dead people.

Paul, the Bible never teaches this. Paul doesn't commend it. It's just happening. You do not have to be... Baptism, we are commanded to be baptized, to obey Jesus Christ.

It's a very significant sacrament, but it doesn't save you. Give me one example of someone who's saved without being baptized.

Luke 23, 43. Today you will be with me in paradise. This guy had no opportunity to be baptized.

[49:45] He had no opportunity to demonstrate the fruit of his conversion, no opportunity to take the membership class at Trinity Fellowship. He's just going to be in paradise next day. So, 1 to 34, we're almost done.

The fact of the resurrection. Now, 35 to 58, the how of the resurrection. Now, let me show you this. Two questions are raised in verse 35, and Paul answers both of them in the following verses. So, verse 35, someone will ask, How are the dead raised, and with what kind of body do they come? So, how are the dead raised?

You see that first question? That is answered in verses 36 to 41. In other words, the conceivability of a resurrection body.

The possibility of a resurrection body. The second question, With what kind of body do they come? That is answered in 42 to 50.

[50:52] The manner and properties of the resurrection body. So, that first section sets forth the conceivability of resurrection by the use of two analogies.

That of seeds and that of different kinds of bodies, heavenly and earthly. He uses two examples. And then, the next section addresses the nature of the resurrection body, which, in the nature of the resurrection body, fundamentally, is that it's patterned after Christ's own resurrection body. That's what Paul says in Philippians 3, 21. Remember what he says there? That we will... We're waiting for our Savior, Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body. So, His is the pattern. And so, what's in view here is not... Not a resuscitation of corpses. Which is what happened to Lazarus.

Never say that Lazarus was resurrected. He wasn't resurrected. The widow. Or the widow's son. He wasn't resurrected.

[52:21] Not technically. Those were a return to natural life. A restoration of their natural life. A resuscitation of their corpses.

Now, powerful miracles, yes, but not resurrection. What resurrection is, is the transformation of bodies. And they become...

I mentioned this early in the week. They become a pneumatic cone. Right? Pneumatic cone bodies. Spiritual bodies. And if you... Remember what I was... What I mentioned the other day. If you form a Greek adjective from a noun, and you use...

With a new Omicron Sigma, it means made of, composed of. If you form that adjective from a kappa, with a kappa. Kappa Omicron Sigma. That means characterized by.

And so, our spiritual bodies aren't composed of spirit. They are characterized by the spirit. In other words, we will receive bodies adapted to the new conditions of heavenly existence.

[53:24] Bodies that are fitted for the new age. So, they're not spiritual bodies made of spirit. You can just stick your hand through your chest.

No. They're bodies that are fitted and adapted for the new heavens and the new earth. Like Jesus' resurrected body was.

Maybe we'll be able to go through walls. In Jesus' resurrection body, it appears that he did.

They're behind locked doors and all of a sudden Jesus is there. Well, if our bodies are like his, maybe. Maybe we can do that too. I don't know. But they will be patterned after his. And then, in light of all of this, I just want to point out one lovely verse.

Verse 15, Paul wraps it all up. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

[54:34] So much we can say about that verse, but the one thing I want to say about it is, this is a perfect example of how Paul utilizes eschatology.

Paul never just gives seminars on eschatology. For Paul, eschatology, and this is true of the New Testament, but especially for Paul, eschatology is always, always, always tied to ethics.

Eschatology is always tied to ethics. In other words, the new age in which we live and the way God is going to wrap up history, that always serves as a motivation for us to live life now.

Not a motivation to escape life now. Not a motivation to escape our responsibilities and just look to the future and go stand on a hillside and wait for Jesus to come back. No, motivation to live life for the glory of God.

Motivated by the great hope we have. So we don't escape the world. We engage the world. We bring the gospel to the world. So we are steadfast, immovable, always abounding, knowing our labor is not in vain.

[55:42] God is using it for his purposes. And we know those purposes are going to end in triumph. Because Christ is going to come back. Then in the last chapter, of course, he brings the substance of the letter to the close, and he deals with subsidiary matters and final greetings.

The one thing I would just point out to us and remind us of, in verses 1 to 4, he gives instructions for the collection for the believers in Jerusalem.

And this is going to be, and just more broadly for your knowledge of Paul, Paul's history and thought, this becomes extremely important for Paul.

And we see two entire chapters on this collection in 2 Corinthians chapters 8 and 9. So this wasn't just mercy ministry.

Paul saw this collection as a mission, a mission initiative. This was to, there were spiritual principles involved.

[56:57] In other words, those who had received blessings from Jerusalem should return blessings to Jerusalem. But Paul really saw this as a way to galvanize the Jewish mission in Jerusalem and Judea with the Gentile mission more broadly.

So this was a lot rioted on this collection for Paul. But that, he brings it up here. It's the first time we see it. Here in 1 Corinthians 16, verses 1 to 4. And then finally, I just, Paul ends the letter in a way unlike any other.

Verse 23, The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. And look at what he does in the last verse.

It's the only place he does this. What does he say? What does he say? My love be with you. All in Christ Jesus.

Isn't that amazing? It's the only time he does it. Despite the Corinthians' failings, despite their arrogance, despite their questioning of Paul's legitimacy, he reaffirms in his own hand, verse 21, in his own handwriting, his love for this church.

[58:17] This is not perfunctory. This is not stylistic. This doesn't mean all the problems are solved yet. It's going to get worse with Corinth before it gets better.

It's not contingent on their response. But it shows Paul's heart for them, and it indicates Paul's application of the truths he began with.

Both he and the Corinthians have been called into the fellowship, koinonia, with Jesus Christ, chapter 1, verse 9. They're members of the same body, saved by the same Savior.

Paul has told them, I am your servant. I am your father. When you suffer, I suffer. I forgo privileges for your sake. Love is the greatest virtue, chapter 13.

Paul wrote eloquently about love. Paul could write eloquently about love in chapter 13, because this is what he had in his heart for the churches that he served.

[59:30] And it, I mean, the first time I ever taught fully on 1 Corinthians, it never occurred to me until I was preparing that that description of love in 1 Corinthians 13 perfectly depicts the posture of

the apostle toward this church.

He believed all things. He bore all things. He hoped all things. He endured all things. And so ultimately, with all the discernment we've seen, with all the correction Paul has given, all the teaching, all the admonishment, all that we are called to give our churches, Paul's final phrase is perhaps the most important quality that we can have as pastors.

Love. Patterned after Christ. Informed by the gospel. Enabled by the spirit.

All for the glory of God. Thank you.