

THE WAY AND WONDER OF THE HEALING CHURCH

STUDY NUMBER FOUR

BEING, DOING AND WORDS

Doctrinal truth first, out of which comes the practical.

- a. Paul's letters often are structured in this way. For example Romans chapters one through eleven are *doctrinal* and then twelve through to the end are *practical*.
- b. In Ephesians the practical section begins as chapter four verse one where we are told to "walk worthy of the calling with which we have been called." He has been writing about this calling in the first three chapters.
- c. *In the doctrinal sections Paul shows what God has done and is doing to change what WE ARE.* DOING comes out of BEING and WORDS do too.
- d. Jesus lived thirty years before He spoke many words recorded in the gospels. Nowadays this is reversed, there are *too many words*.
- e. In Ephesians chapter four verses eight through fourteen Paul is *contrasting true, false and imbalanced ministries*. He often does this in his letters. He writes to correct those who "major on minors," neglecting the heart of truth (which is Christ) and speaking many words about doing this and that, these are ministries that do not deal with what we ARE in our BEINGS.
- f. These false and imbalanced ministries produce churches full of immaturity, children tossed to and fro by the winds of doctrine and even the craftiness of some ministers. Eph 4v14.
- g. *The aim of true ministry is not evangelism and lots of 'doing' but BEING like Christ, out of this will flow works and words.* Eph 4v15&16.
- h. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is intended to change our BEINGS. Acts 1v8 "You shall BE witnesses unto Me." *Witness is not primarily words, it is what we are* and is a dominant theme of the whole of the Bible. In the Old Testament God had a people, they were called to BE a different people, regulated in every department of their life together as a nation, so that they showed forth the excellencies of their God in contrast to all the filthy gods in other nations round about. 1 Peter 2v9 and Deut 7v6-8 *Every aspect of their life was to be a testimony to God's holiness and Being, He even gave them instructions about going to the toilet! Deut 23v12-14*
- i. *Everything in Jesus' Being witnessed to His Father. We are a witness to what we prioritize in our lives.*

CHRIST JESUS HAS GIFTED HIS CHURCH TO BRING IT TO MATURITY OF BEING

- a. There are many *lists* in Paul's writings. Here is a list that includes five types of men gifts. (Eph 4v11) If we look at another list we find some missing there present in this list and he adds others to that list. (1Cor 12v28) This shows that Paul was not presenting a kind of "seminar on

ministry” including lots of ‘points’ but he wrote and emphasized certain things as they came to him by the prompting of the Holy Spirit as he considered the different conditions in the churches to which he was writing. ***These lists are what are called ‘ad hoc,’ no one list should be regarded as the ‘last word’ on the matter, we should gather them all together and thus consider the subject. Rom 12v6-8, Eph 4v11, 1Cor 12v28. But there are many other lists that connect with these also. At least five of them in 1 Cor 12-14.***

- b. These words ‘**apostle**’ ‘**prophet**’ and **all the others are not titles and they are not offices** in the church. The church is NOT a business and not structured like one, businesses have offices like CEO and treasurer and these must be filled. In the church the term pastor is simply descriptive of the kind of deacon service that a person does, the same is true of apostle and all the other words. ***These gifts are the emergence of Jesus’ life in different ways in different people. All have their origin and dependence upon the Head and can only be what they are meant to be as the member holds to the Head himself or herself.*** Eph 4v15
- c. These gifts are sometimes called ‘**men gifts**’ and are **like the major organs in the physical body but all are dependent upon the Head.** For instance, Paul’s service was concentrated more in the direction of apostleship but included the pastoral for at times he remained as a pastor in one place a while, all depended upon the Lord Jesus, the Head in whose fellowship he was living.
- d. ***Christ set us free that we might become gifts.*** Eph 4v8
- e. **He went to the cross for us that we might no longer be a nuisance** and a curse on the earth but a blessing and **a gift bringing healing** instead of infecting people with wrong things, hence **we become the healing church**, channels of healing, becoming **a grace gift** wherever we are, ***this is His intention for us all***, all gifts of the Spirit are given to be concrete expressions of God’s delivering healing love and grace.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH

- a. By ‘spirit’ in the church we do not only mean Holy Spirit (Eph 4v3) but ***the general spirit in the church*** itself as defined by four words in verse two, humility, gentleness, patience and forbearing in love.
- b. These words describe the way we must live with one another in the church. ***The church will not be an agent of God’s healing in the earth unless we learn to live in these fruit of the Spirit.***
- c. Proper working of all gifts and ministries are entirely dependent upon living in this ‘spirit.’
- d. ***Improper working of all gifts and ministries*** are sure to result from not holding to the Head Jesus and living in these fruit. Among those results will be the following of ***doctrinal imbalances*** and ***fanciful ideas and fads***. These things are common in our day; we know this because of the ‘**infanthood**’ so evident in many believers.
- e. ***We must maintain our individual unity with the Spirit each day and be eager to maintain this unity with each other too in that one Spirit.*** Eph 4v3&4

- f. *If I do not maintain this unity with my Head by the Spirit I will do damage in the body of Christ if I attempt to exercise my 'gift' and 'ministry.'*

THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT DEFINED

- a. There are *seven* things in this definition, they are found in Ephesians four verses four through six.
- b. Note the repetition of the word '*one*.'
- c. Note *the central ONE, it is the Lord*. (Jesus) *Paul is very orderly in his unfolding of the truth of this spiritual unity*.
- d. We are brought into the *one body* (Christ the Lord's body) by *one baptism*, (The Lord Jesus baptizes us) into *one Spirit* (the Spirit of the Lord Jesus and of God) and there is only *one faith* (Jesus') that properly works in that body and there is only *one central calling and hope* that every member of the body shares (to be like Jesus) and to all of us in that body there is only *one Father*, (He is the Father of Jesus).
- e. *In all these things we see the Trinity of Father, Son and Spirit has brought us into full unity with God in Three Persons that we might live in that unity and be true people gifts in the earth*.
- f. There is *no racial body*, (Chinese/English/Indian Church, Denominational church); we are not the pastors' church. *Every member has direct connection with the Head from Whom their life comes*. Eph 4v15&16 and Col 2v19
- g. There is *one Spirit in the body*, it is not a domineering one, a critical one, an 'Elijah' spirit even, it is *the Spirit of its Head Jesus*. It is the spirit that is *yielding*, that *pours itself out*.
- h. **It is in this atmosphere and in this Spirit that all the gifts are intended to flow, there is a fragrance of goodness and grace when the gifts are being manifested in this Spirit**. It is not raucous, oppressive, manipulative or domineering. Service is fragrant with the oil of the Holy Spirit.
- i. There is one faith in this body and it is *the faith of Jesus*, His was not a 'name and claim' kind of triumphalistic faith but always had its origin in the knowledge that came to Him *as a result of His fellowship with what His Father was doing*, faith in the body of Christ flourishes in fellowship with the Trinity which means it **works by love**. Gal 5v6
- j. In the context of this there will be the emergence from time to time of *special gifts of faith for special things* that the Father wants to do and special healing too, *but all comes from Him through His Son and by the Spirit*.

LIFE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

- a. The Corinthian church had forgotten what *spirit* they were of and what *body* they were part of.
- b. They were suffering from the disease of *pride* and were *arrogant, elitist* and *division* was rife amongst them. There were *cliques*, they were *proud of their spiritual standing as they interpreted it*.

- c. We need to read the whole of the first epistle carefully. *They thought* they were people of power and wisdom and had much knowledge and delighted in the logos, (words) Repeatedly in the letter the words connected with knowledge, wisdom, power and various *forms of utterance* will be found.
- d. One form of utterance seemed to be regarded amongst them as a *measure of their spirituality*, it was the gift of tongues. They thought it was a mark of their heavenliness. 1 Cor 13v1 *they thought they were especially endowed.*
- e. This even led some of them to think that heaven had come down and there was no resurrection to come. 1Cor 15v13
- f. Along with this they *did not concern themselves with morality, they were 'heavenly' people so they thought it did not matter what they did in their bodies.* (See chapter five and six)
- g. *How did all this affect their meetings?* Chapters 11 through 14 are an answer and Paul's corrections to them.
- h. *They thought* that they had knowledge but Paul says love is the key. 1 Cor 8v3 and chapter 13. They were proud of having the '*secret*' knowledge of being, of Paul, or of Apollos or of Cephas or even of Christ' 1Cor 1v12
- i. *To all these confusions Paul emphasizes two truths*, first the UNITY of the body and secondly the VARIETY of the gifts and ministries in it.
- j. **Note how he embedded** all he said about the BODY and the VARIETY in the TRINITY and the workings of the Three Persons. 1Cor 12v4-6
- k. The TRINITY is not one person but Three Persons in one Being, there is **variety** if we may say that, the Father and Son are the same but different. By this we mean that the Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Father, each is different from the other, for the Son is truly Son to the Father and the Father is truly Father to the Son. Although the Spirit is one with Father and Son He is Himself different in role and activity. *The Body of Christ reflects this; it is not all 'one' thing although it is one body, there are profound diversities of gifts and functions within it and each is to 'itself' and thus contribute to the whole.*
- l. **Do not get obsessed with our own particular ministry; the Persons of the Trinity do not get obsessed that way. They are One in all that they are and do.**
- m. *Our churches need to experience the variety of gifts.* "Pop" culture is dominated by music and this has crept into our churches. The church is much colored by the world in which it lives its life.
- n. We must regulate our meetings according to the variety Paul writes of in these chapters. There are at least five lists in chapters 12 through 14 and they all have variety in them.
- o. *The Sunday morning* meeting is very important and *should contain more variety.* Usually only fifty percent of the congregation ever attends another weekly meeting. There should be greater riches in this main church meeting so that there can be *greater ministry to the healing of all and their building up.*
- p. In each of the lists that Paul writes in these chapters he mentions one thing, *the Corinthian favorite, tongues!* But notice where he places it in each of the lists. Sometimes at the bottom, 12v10&28&30, sometimes at the beginning, 13v1 and sometimes in the middle 14v1 and 14v26. He is not

encouraging them to do away with tongues but wanting them to *put it in its place amongst the variety*. If Paul were in the churches today, he would not be writing about tongues, but **music in the churches**, he would not want to do away with it, but *regulate its dominance so as to encourage other gifts in variety*.

LIFE IN THE CHURCH MEETING

- a. Examine the various **lists** Paul constructs in chapters 12 through fourteen of 1 Corinthians. We have mentioned some of them above. List the things together in one long list.
- b. Notice that in the first list in chapter twelve verse eight the gift of the utterance of wisdom is mentioned first, then the word of knowledge second. After this there is mention of prophecy, tongues and interpretation of tongues. We can see what *a heavy emphasis he places upon words of various kinds that edify the church*. This kind of theme occupies his writing in much more depth in chapter fourteen; he uses the word ‘prophecy’ a great deal.
- c. Look carefully at his definition of what he believes **New Testament prophecy** is. (1 Cor14v3) He lists three things in that verse. He further speaks of his own utterance with another list to be found in verse six where he mentions bringing four different elements that could be contained in prophetic utterance.
- d. Notice the *absence of any notion of prophecy being private, personal prophecy*. The New Testament does not know anything of that kind of thing where people prophesy future events over one another. The only place that suggests a thing like that being possible is concerning Timothy and we must notice that it is only one reference and *took place in the presence of others who could judge what was being said*. 1 Tim 4v14
- e. See how Paul *regulates* the use of prophecy and yet *encourages* it, also that it be *judged*. 1 Cor14v27-30.
- f. In all these **lists** Paul is seeking to *redirect* and *reprioritize* the Corinthian church. *Wisdom* was desperately needed in this church, they needed to put first things first and not over emphasize those things that were of less importance. We must not wrongly emphasize the lesser things to the detriment of those that are essential. If we put those central things in their proper place the result will be that the lesser things will have their proper value and enrich the whole. *Wisdom is the ability to recognize things and give them their appropriate value and place*.
- g. He tells the church to *be zealous for the BEST gifts*. 12v31 and 14v1.
- h. Throughout these chapters Paul puts their enthusiasm for tongues *in proper context*, setting it further back down the list. Not because he did not like this gift for he spoke in tongues more than all of them but because preoccupation with this gift meant that other gifts, better and richer were being neglected. The same is true for us in our meetings; *music has its place but should not have such a central place*. See the list in chapter fourteen verse twenty-six: “a hymn, a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation.”

- i. Paul mentions five things in this list, ***test your own church meetings by these things***, firstly whether the way the meeting is structured permits the possibility that they could be seen in the meeting and secondly whether there are those used to moving in these gifts. Remember that ***this list of five things is not exhaustive*** and does involve song and music as one component.
- j. Again, do not lose sight of the burden of Paul's heart throughout these chapters, that there be ***intelligent utterances of all kinds that build up the church***. In this context, remember that ***it is not the music that is important but the words that are being sung, the instruments are the handmaids of the voice*** and should ***assist the voices*** to raise their song of praise, or of revelation and statement of God and His doings.
- k. ***Prophecy*** usually partakes of the nature of the spontaneous but does not mean that there is no ***preparation*** in the heart. ***God gives to us a reservoir of truth and understanding as we read, as we walk with Him, thus the Spirit has something to quicken and breathe upon, it is there already in our hearts***, we sense His anointing quickening something to us, we begin to utter it at a suitable juncture in the meeting, so the Spirit directs our hearts and selects certain truths sometimes adding to them things we had never thought of before. Prophetic utterance can 'spark off' preaching, teaching and also further prophetic utterance.
- l. Paul's emphasis upon word, wisdom, utterance of all kinds including tongues and interpretation and prophecy is of vital importance for us. ***What caused dis-ease in mankind? Words, utterances that came from a wrong spirit***. This was true in the Garden of Eden. We all have been victims of words that have dis-eased our lives; words damage! Sin began with wrong words being received. ***Wrong words, unkind words*** bring di-vorce, di-vision, and many other such di-versions.
- m. ***Healing begins with right words, edifying words, loving words coming from the heart of God through people***. They bring reconciliation, vision, and the true version of life. Throughout this long section of 1 Corinthians Paul is aiming at the emergence of ***a church full of the word of God's grace that brings health*** to the soul, the body, the mind and the spirit.