

The Spirit's Point

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction.

A. Text: I Corinthians 12:1-6.

B. The point of the Christian life is learning to walk moment by moment in the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

II. Problems Paul addresses to the Corinthians.

A. Pride.

B. Lust.

C. Life and its dangers.

III. Spiritual matters: the gifts of the Spirit in the body of Christ.

A. The unmistakable mark of religious error is idolatry.

1. Today, the images are gone but the reality remains.
2. Idolatry is anything that exercises control over us.
3. Human beings were made to be possessed only by God.
4. This suggests a process of being led astray.
5. There are wicked spirits in high places that affect a person.
6. All forms of idolatry lead to death.

IV. The marks of an idolatrous spirit.

A. It centers on a personality.

B. It has a certain degree of regimentation and control.

C. There is a special claim to unique powers.

D. There is a stress on finances, and money is seen as a power to fulfill goals.

1. Money is never the center of ministry.
2. People can start wherever they are.

E. There is unending jealousy and strife.

V. The test of a spirit is whether it exalts Jesus Christ or not.

- A. The centrality of Christ is never diminished for the true believer.
- B. Anyone who says that Jesus is just a man is saying that Jesus is a part of the cursed race of man.
- C. The creed of the early church was that Jesus is Lord.
- D. Jesus is Lord now--He is in charge of all human events.
- E. The group that makes much of the Lord not the Spirit is the one that manifests the Spirit of God.

VI. Everything the church possesses comes from the Lord Himself.

- A. There is variety and unity, which is the mark of God.
- B. God gives the capacity to serve.
 - 1. The gifts of the Spirit give fulfillment to existence.
 - 2. Jesus provides the opportunities to serve.
 - 3. The Father is in charge of the results of believers exercising their gifts.

Application questions:

1. What have you seen in our culture that demonstrates the marks of an idolatrous spirit?

2. Who do you know that personally exemplifies a life that exalts Jesus Christ? How do they do this?

3. Why do you think God designed the church to show both variety and unity? Explain.

