

10. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians

I. "Concerning spiritual gifts (Chapters 12-14) Introduction: The problem The Corinthians" experience, A criterion for the discernment of spiritual gifts The chiastic structure of 1 Corinthians 12-14 1) The large chiasm (12:4-14:38) The chiasm within the chiasm (12:4-31)

Focus Points: The "gifts" (charismata, chapters 12 and 14) Their nature (12:4-7) "To each his own" (vv. 7, 11) The variety of gifts: nine on the first list (vv. 8-10), eight on the second (v. 28), seven on the third (vv.29-30) The singular importance of prophecy (14:19) 2) The body of Christ (12:12-26) A political image appropriated by Paul (Menenius, Aelius Aristides) Commonly used to speak about unity (Aesop, Plato, Seneca, Plutarch, Dio Chrysostom) (c) Distinct characteristics of the Pauline image, God arranged the members of the body, The weak and less respectable members are indispensable,

"The greatest of these is love" (Chapter 13) A love song, Paul's personal comparison (13:1-3), The qualities of love (13:4-7) The permanence of love (13:8-15)

II. The Resurrection of the Dead, The creed, basis of all belief in the resurrection of the dead (15:1-34) Two problems to which Paul responds: What kind of body do they come?" (15:35-49) "There is no resurrection of the dead'

III. Practical Matters (Chapter 16), The collection for the saints (16:1-4), A travelogue (16:5-9), And a postscript (16:24)

Review Questions

1. Does what Paul writes about the spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 have any relevance for the Church today?
2. What does Paul mean by love?
3. What would Paul tell us when we start to speculate on what life in heaven will be like?