

1 Corinthians 12:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

Analysis

Now concerning spiritual gifts (peri de tōn pneumatikōn, περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν)—Paul shifts to address the Corinthians' question about pneumatika, literally "spiritual things" or "things of the Spirit." The neuter plural can refer either to spiritual gifts themselves or to spiritually-gifted people, though context favors gifts. **I would not have you ignorant** signals this is correction, not mere information—the Corinthians were confused or misusing spiritual gifts.

This formula (ou thelō hymas agnoeīn) introduces important theological instruction throughout Paul's letters (Romans 1:13, 11:25; 2 Corinthians 1:8). The Corinthians prided themselves on gnōsis (knowledge, 1 Cor 8:1), yet remained dangerously ignorant about the Spirit's operation. Their pagan background (verse 2) left them vulnerable to counterfeit spirituality and competitive gift-display rather than body-edification.

Historical Context

Corinth was a cosmopolitan port city saturated with mystery religions, ecstatic pagan worship, and prophetic oracle-sites. The Corinthian church, barely a decade old (founded c. AD 50), struggled to distinguish Christian Spirit-manifestation from their former pagan ecstatic experiences. Paul writes c. AD 55 to correct theological confusion and practical disorder.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What areas of spiritual life might Christians today remain 'ignorant' about despite claiming knowledge?
2. How does your pagan or secular background shape your understanding of the Holy Spirit's work?
3. Why does Paul emphasize instruction and knowledge about gifts rather than just experiencing them?

Interlinear Text

Περὶ	δὲ	τῶν	πνευματικῶν	ἀδελφοί	οὐ	θέλω	ὑμᾶς
concerning	Now	G3588	spiritual	gifts brethren	not	I would	you
G4012	G1161		G4152	G80	G3756	G2309	G5209

ἀγνοεῖν

ignorant

G50

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 14:37 (Spirit): If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.