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Confronting Church Divisions and Realizing Peace: A Social-Rhetorical Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

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Abstract:

Christianity is the following of Christ who is the Prince of Peace. A church that follows Christ should bring peace like Christ. However, in reality, church divisions have occurred throughout church history. There are various factors that lead to church divisions. In 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, Paul looks at the phenomenon of church division. Through Social-Rhetorical Interpretation (SRI), the author tries to find the factors that cause church divisions and Paul's strategy in resolving church divisions. In the end, it appears that the church split occurred due to the church's lack of unity in serving because of the various gifts they possessed. To address this, Paul gave arguments and explanations to the Corinthians to do peaceful service for the common good in the power of the Holy Spirit for Jesus Christ who is the Prince of Peace. Paul's message in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 is not only useful to the Corinthian church but also to the church throughout history, including the church today.

Keywords:

Church divisions;
Corinth; gifts; social-
rhetorical interpretation;
unity of service

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INTRODUCTION

Christians are followers of Jesus Christ who is the Prince of Peace. Jesus called the children of God "peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9). Those who follow Jesus should accept his teachings on peace and give the ministry of peace- "that the God of love and peace expects God's children to also act in a loving and peaceful manner"¹ The peace ministry of believers begins with peace in the church itself. Unfortunately, churches still often have divisions that result in the church being unable to bring peace.

The phenomenon of church division has existed throughout church history. This is an important issue that should be addressed. Not a few churches that were once one unit split into several churches. Divisions in the church are inevitable and always exist in various forms of reasons. The problem arises when existing churches are selfish. What should have been a united church to serve the common good instead became a stumbling block because it caused division.

Divisions do not only occur between churches. Divisions also occur within the church itself. Church divisions occur within the church between congregation and congregation; congregation and assembly; assembly and assembly. These divisions often occur because of the inability of leaders and Christians in general to bridge differences within the congregation and among ministers. Conversely, within the church itself, divisions often occur because of the arrogance of congregants and even ministers. Members of the congregation who have gifts that should support the progress of the ministry but instead boast and favor themselves or consider themselves more important than other members of the congregation.

There are various factors that are the source of division, one of which is the disunity of the churches in the ministry. These divisions have had a negative impact internally on the fellowship of believers: hostility, hatred, resentment, bitterness and even murder. This negative impact internally has a negative impact externally (concerning the testimony of believers to the world), the church loses its function as the epistle of Christ, thus causing the world to be unable to believe in Christ.

¹ Marlin E Miller, *The Church's Peace Witness* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1994), 110.

In addition, the church failed in its duty to bring peace. Instead, it became a source of conflict and a stumbling block for believers. The church is unable to bring peace because it is preoccupied with the divisive issues that occur within the church itself. This certainly has the effect of reducing the power of church ministry. Then how can today's church ministry have power? This can be done by the church by doing joint service. Then, how should the joint service be carried out by the church, so that the church can bring peace?

A similar phenomenon related to division also occurred in the Corinthian church. In the face of signs of division in the Corinthian church, Paul discusses the church at length by analogizing it to the unity of the church in Christ in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. In this section Paul discusses issues related to the relationship between the members of the church in relation to the gifts that exist.² The problem that occurred was division in the church due to the diversity of gifts.³ It seems that Paul's message in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 has a great contribution for today's churches in dealing with the divisions that occur, especially in Indonesia which not only has a variety of gifts in the church but also a variety of cultures, tribes, and languages. Paul's message also contributes to the church in Indonesia to bring peace, as is the task of the church as well as an important message from the opening of the 4th paragraph of the 1945 Constitution.⁴

The text of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 has received much attention from interpreters. For example, John Collins who focuses on 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 analyzes this text against the category of ministry as a gift for ministry development *charismata, diakoniai dan energemata*.⁵ Meanwhile, De Wet in his thesis analyzes the text of 1 Corinthians 12 from John Chrysostom's point of view regarding the gifts of the Spirit (Charismata).⁶ Similarly, Aryeh in his research on 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 with exegesis analysis relates this text in the context of the local church in Ghana related to the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy

² Robert L Thomas, *Understanding Spiritual Gifts: The Christian's Special Gifts in the Light of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Nashville: Moody Publisher, 1974), 87; Debora K Malik, *Kesatuan Dalam Keberagaman* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2011), 50.

³ J.W MacGormann, *The Gifts of the Spirit: An Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Nashville: Broadman, 1980), 30.

⁴ Yudi Latif, *Negara Paripurna: Historisitas, Rasionalitas, Dan Aktualitas Pancasila* (PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2011), 55.

⁵ John N Collins, "Ministry as a Distinct Category among Charismata (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)," *Neotestamentica* 27, no. 1 (1993): 79-91.

⁶ Chris Len De Wet, "The Homilies of John Chrysostom on 1 Corinthians 12: A Model of Antiochene Exegesis on The Charismata" (University of Pretoria, 2007).

Spirit.⁷ Johnson's recent research has interpreted 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 through socio-rhetorical interpretation, and related it to leadership development.⁸ Johnson uses one of the social-rhetorical interpretation approaches, namely inner texture. Similarly, the author will also use a socio-rhetorical interpretation approach to the text of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. However, with some differences from Johnson, the author will use inner texture, socio-and-culture texture and sacred texture. The inner texture in this research is also different from the research conducted by Johnson. This research will enrich the inner-texture research with the "tracing argument" analysis popularized by Thomas Schreiner. Similarly, the socio-and-culture texture and sacred-texture are attempts to enrich the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11.

METHODS

The research method used in this writing is a qualitative research method, which is research based on data.⁹ The use of qualitative methods in this paper is done by looking at, recording and managing literature to find meaning in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. The text will be examined using the Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation (SRI) hermeneutical approach by Vernon K. Robbins.¹⁰ The chosen hermeneutic of Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation, designed by Robbins, allows for the display of various textual textures. Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation is a development of rhetorical criticism or rhetorical analysis that developed around the 1960. The Social Rhetorical Interpretation (SRI) approach contains five parts, also called the five textures, namely Inner-texture, Inter-texture, Socio-and-Cultural texture, Ideological texture, and Sacred texture. These five textures have different perspectives. This research will use three textures, namely inner texture, social-and-culture texture and sacred texture. The three textures, namely:

⁷ Daniel Nii Aboagye Aryeh, "Exegetical Analysis of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 for an Understanding of the Manifestation of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in Ghanaian Charismatic Churches," *Journal of Applied Thought* 3, no. 3 (2014): 22.

⁸ Tanesha Johnson, "The Need For Unity of Diversity in Leadership Development: An Inner Texture Analysis of 1 Corinthians 12," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 11, no. 1 (2021): 104-16.

⁹ Emzir, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif: Analisis Data* (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2010), 1.

¹⁰ Vernon K Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts* (Texas: Trinity Press International, 1996), 1-2.

1. Inner-texture.

The inner texture looks at the language features that are visible in the language of the text itself.¹¹ This inner texture shows the communication between the writer and the reader.¹² The first step taken by the author in this texture is to determine the rhetorical type of the Corinthian letter so that the structure of the Corinthian text can be identified, and the function of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 in the rhetoric will be examined, and finally, the author will trace the argument of the passage by using the "tracing the argument" approach popularized by Schreiner.

2. Socio-and-Cultural texture.

Social and cultural texture is the representation of the text in showing the interaction of the values or social and cultural context of the community among writers and readers. A text will show the social and cultural life, as well as the norms recognized by the general public.¹³

3. Sacred texture.

Sacred texture wants to show the theological value of a text. In a text, readers will find theological values about God, humanity, salvation, or the end of time.¹⁴

DISCUSSION

Inner Texture

Rhetorical Types of 1 Corinthians

In Greco-Roman literature, scholars identify three forms of text in terms of rhetorical style. Aristotle suggested three types of rhetoric in Greco-Roman literature, namely: Judicial/Forensic (legal) rhetoric, Deliberative rhetoric (political or religious debate), and Epideictic rhetoric (praise or blame).¹⁵ Osborne explains the three forms of rhetoric as follows: Forensic rhetoric is used to express judgment on something that

¹¹ Vernon K Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts* (Texas: Trinity Press International, 1996), 7.

¹² Robbins, 7.

¹³ David B. Gowler, "Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation: Textures of a Text and Its Reception," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 33, no. 2 (December 26, 2010): 191–206, 195.

¹⁴ Vernon K Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts* (Texas: Trinity Press International, 1996), 120.

¹⁵ Aristoteles, *Retorika Seni Berbicara* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Basabasi, 2018), 180.

happened in the past; deliberative rhetoric is used for advice regarding possible situations in the future; while epideictic rhetoric, deals with discourse related to praise or accusation.¹⁶

With regard to 1 Corinthians, Witherington III states that this letter reflects a deliberative rhetorical style. He writes:

Probably Paul envisioned the reading of 1 Corinthians in the Christian assembly as a substitute for the deliberative discourse he would have delivered in person... That he used deliberative rhetoric, even with a troubled community, suggests that he believed the Corinthian Christian community had a future and that it needed to make decisions pertaining to that future.¹⁷

Similarly, Mitchel states that the letter of 1 Corinthians is a deliberative rhetoric:

Deliberative rhetoric is compatible with the letter genre, Paul's use of it in 1 Corinthians is not anomalous in ancient literature, and is fully appropriate to both the epistolary and rhetorical elements which combine in this way.¹⁸

Mitchel confirms that 1 Corinthians is a letter that has deliberative rhetoric by pointing out four signs of deliberative rhetoric, namely:

1. Focus on the future,
2. the application of a specific set of appeals or objectives,
3. presenting evidence with examples, and
4. a subject worthy of consideration, where factionalism and harmony are so prevalent.¹⁹

1 Corinthians is a document of Paul responding to what he heard verbally about the situation in Corinth. The letter is written more for problem solving and some are more oriented towards encouraging progress in the faith.²⁰ The deliberative rhetoric that Paul uses aims to persuade the Corinthian church members to put aside their many misunderstandings and resulting differences of opinion - and to achieve a greater degree of

¹⁶ Grant R Osborne, *Spiral Hermeneutika: Pengantar Komprehensif Bagi Penafsiran Alkitab* (Jakarta: Momentum, 2006), 165.

¹⁷ Ben Witherington III, *Community Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1995), 46-47.

¹⁸ Margaret M Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 21.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 24.

²⁰ Anthony C Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: NIGTC* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2000), 39; Witherington III, *Community Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthian*, 22; Kenneth E Bailey, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural Studies In 1 Corinthians* (Illinois: IVP Academic, 2011), 15.

unity (1 Cor 1:10).²¹ In 1 Corinthians, Paul's primary task is for reconciliation. Paul is in the midst of creating community and eliminating conflict in the Corinthian Christian community.²² To address these sources of discord, Paul gives in his letter a lengthy discourse on harmony or reconciliation using deliberative rhetoric.²³

Paul used rhetoric flexibly to achieve diverse goals and deal with complex issues. According to Witherington III, the highly complex situation of the Corinthians made 1 Corinthians require deliberative rhetoric.²⁴ M. M. Mitchell states that deliberative rhetoric in Paul's day addresses emotions, human desires and policies of action for the future and presents examples.²⁵ The text of 1 Corinthians 12 contains a frequently used example, although Paul uses it in an unusual way. In deliberative rhetoric, one is concerned not only with what is wise but also with what is honorable, which involves four cardinal virtues: wisdom (cf. 1 Corinthians 1-4), justice (cf. chapters 5-6), courage (cf. chapters 7 and 15), and temperance (cf. chapters 8-14).²⁶

Structure of 1 Corinthians based on Rhetoric

Based on the rhetorical structure, Ben Witherinton following Mitchell with slight modifications divides the structure of 1 Corinthians as follows:²⁷

Chapters and Verse	Parts
1:1-3	The Epistolary <i>Prescript</i>
1:4-9	Thanksgiving and <i>Exordium</i>
1:10	<i>Propositio</i>
1:11-17	<i>Narratio</i>
1:18-4:21	<i>Probatio</i>
1:18-4:21	a. Division over leader and wisdom
5-6	b. Sexual immorality and lawsuits
7	c. Marriage and singleness
8-11:1	d. Idol food and eating in idol worship

²¹ Maria A. Pascuzzi CSJ, *First and Second Corinthians: Volume 7 (New Colledgeville Bible Commentary: New Testament)* (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2005), 12.

²² Witherington III, *Community Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*, 73.

²³ Witherington III, 75.

²⁴ Witherington III, 77.

²⁵ Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation*, 23.

²⁶ Mitchell, 34.

²⁷ Witherington III, *Community Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*, 76.

11:1-16	e. Headcoverings in Worship
11:17-34	f. Abuses of The Lord's Supper
12-14	g. Spritual Gifts in Christ's body
15	h. The Future and the other ministries for Corinth
16:1-12	i. The Collection and other ministries for Corinth
16:13-18	<i>The Peroratio</i>
16:19-24	The Closing epistolary greetings and remarks

Looking at the table above, it can be concluded that 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 is part of probatio. According to Witherington III, probatio "was the heart of a rhetorical speech or letter and included the principal arguments used to persuade the audience".²⁸ This was in line with the problems in Corinth that led Paul to present arguments that could influence the Corinthians. Paul organized his arguments according to certain topics or issues.

Joop Smith in his study of 1 Corinthians 12-14 argues that it forms a rhetorical unit that is introduced with an exordium designed to gain an audience, in which Paul finds himself forced to use the indirect approach known in rhetoric as insinuation (as opposed to the more overt and direct principle).²⁹ Chapters 12-14 are a rhetorical unit with three parts of argument.³⁰

This section is a new topic from the previous articles. This can be seen from the phrase περί δε. After Paul had previously discussed women prophesying in the congregation (11:2-16), the Lord's Supper (11:17-34), Paul now wanted to discuss gifts and love (12-14).³¹ Paul uses περί δε several times in the probatio of 1 Corinthians to introduce his topic including in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, it seems that Paul wants to explain the topic of the gifts that exist in the Corinthian church that cause the ministry to not run well because of the division that occurs.

²⁸ Ibid, 76

²⁹ Joop Smith, "Argument and Genre of 1 Cor. 12-14," in *Rhetoric and the New Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 211-19.

³⁰ D.A Carson, *Showing The Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1987), 17. Thomas R Schreiner, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary (Volume 7) (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries)* (Illinois: IVP Academic, 2018).

³¹ Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation*.

Tracing Argument

An important part of interpreting Paul's letters is the reconstruction of the arguments used by Paul.³² In order to see Paul's argument, the interpreter needs to look at the function of the different prepositions in the text to see how all the prepositions are related to each other.³³ Schreiner states that one of the weaknesses in many commentaries today is the failure to analyze the arguments in each paragraph and the failure to explain how each paragraph relates to the paragraphs before and after it. This is why it is so important to help the interpreter discover the function of each proposition in Paul's letter.³⁴ This argument reconstruction is part of the inner texture.

In general, in a writing, one idea is connected to another. To understand one part of a writing, an interpreter cannot understand it narrowly, so it is necessary to examine not only the part of the text under study but also in relation to the whole idea. Based on Schreiner, there are three main steps that the author will take in exploring the argument of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. First, I will separate the different propositions of each verse. Secondly, I will trace the argument of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 schematically (chart). Finally, I will explain the main and supporting points in the text of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11.³⁵ For an explanation of propositions and an explanation of each scheme of relations between propositions can be seen through Surbakti's writing on Paul's Argumentation Scheme in the letter 1 Timothy 5:3-16.³⁶ The following is an analysis of tracing the argument of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11:

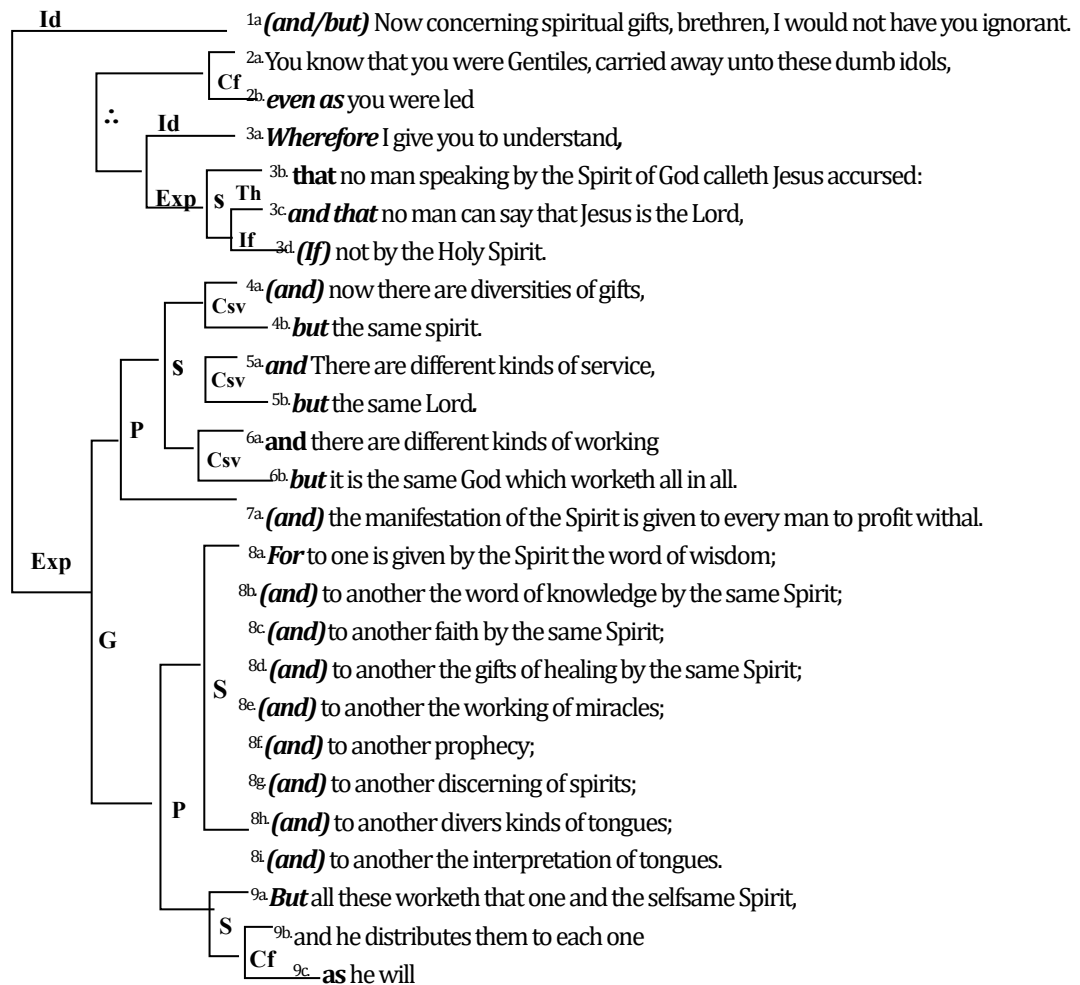
³² Thomas R Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2011). 97.

³³ Thomas R Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistle* (United State of America: Baker Book House Company, 1990), 96.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 97.

³⁵ Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles*, 108.

³⁶ Pelita Hati Surbakti, "Kepedulian Sosial Yang Rasional Dan Mendidik: Analisis Sosial Dan Analisis Argumentasi 1 Timotius 5:3-16," *Dunamis: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Kristiani* 8, no. 1 (2023): 18, doi: 10.30648/dun.v8i1.1060.



Explanation of Proposition Scheme of Argumentation 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

The text of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 begins with the phrase “περι δε” or “now about” which is found in proposition 1a. Scholars agree that the phrase “περι δε” is about to refer to a new topic that Paul wants to address.³⁷ The topics that Paul addresses in this section are the topics of τῶν πνευματικῶν (*ton pneumatikon*) or “*Spiritual Gifts*”. That is why proposition 1a is an Idea-Explanation proposition. Proposition 1a is an idea that has an explanation in

³⁷ Witherington III, *Community Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*, 253; Anthony C Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: NIGTC* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2000), 907; Gordon D Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians, Revised Edition (New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT))* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1987), 575; Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 204. Leon L Morris, *1 Corinthians (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries)* (Michigan: IVP Academic, 2008), 81.

propositions 2a-9c. Paul's idea of "Spiritual Gifts" in proposition 1a is explained by Paul in propositions 2a-9c.

The first proposition in the text of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 is found in propositions 2a-3d. This section is an explanation of the early life of the Corinthians. The propositions in this section have the form of Comparison (Cf).³⁸ In Proposition 2a Paul describes the Corinthians' life before knowing God. The Corinthians had a vain mind (p. 2a). Paul explains this more specifically with the comparison from proposition 2b that the Corinthians were drawn to vain idols (p. 2b). Paul then continues his rhetoric where through p. 2a-2b Paul draws a conclusion with his belief in propositions 3a-3d. The relation between p. 2a-2b and 3a-3d is an inference scheme.³⁹ The conclusion of p. 2a-2b is a form of Idea-Explanation. The idea that refers to Paul's belief (p. 3a) is explained in p.3b-3d with two series,⁴⁰ namely:

1. No one who speaks (in) the Spirit of God can say: "Jesus accursed" (p. 3b).
2. There is no one, who can confess: "Jesus is the Lord "(p. 3c).

In the second series proposition (p. 3c), Paul explains that proposition 3c is a Conditional (If/Th) relation⁴¹ with p. 3d. Series p. 3c, namely "there is no one who can confess: "Jesus is the Lord" is the cause of action of the Holy Spirit (p. 3d).

The second proposition in the text of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 is found in propositions 4a-7a. This proposition is later related to the third proposition (p. 8a-9b). The first relation in the second proposition is the Progression relation (P)⁴² found in p. 4a and 4b; p. 5a and 5b; p. 6a and 6b. The word "but" is the basis for determining the Progression relation⁴³ where each proposition moves towards a climax, namely:

³⁸ Thomas R Schreiner, "Comparison (Cf) Is a Statement or Action in the Main Proposition That Is Explained More Specifically with a Comparison Statement That Shows What the Main Proposition Is Like.," in *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2011), 182.

³⁹ Thomas R Schreiner, "Inference (∴) Is a Statement or Event from Which a Conclusion Is Drawn," in *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2011), 182.

⁴⁰ Thomas R Schreiner, "Series (S) Are Propositions That Contribute to the Overall Climate," in *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2011), 182.

⁴¹ Schreiner, "Comparison (Cf) Is a Statement or Action in the Main Proposition That Is Explained More Specifically with a Comparison Statement That Shows What the Main Proposition Is Like."

⁴² This proposition develops the argument with an opposing statement that contrasts with the main proposition.

⁴³ Thomas R Schreiner, "Progression (P) Are Propositions That Move towards a Climax," in *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2011), 182.

1. On p. 4a, "and now there are diversities of gifts" reaches its climax on p. 4b, "but same spirit".
2. On p. 5a, "and there are different kinds of services" leads to the climax of the proposition on p. 5b, "but same Lord".
3. On p. 6a, "and there are different kinds of working" leads to the climax of p. 6b, "but it is the same God which worketh all in all".

The three progression relations on p. 4a and 4b; 5a and 5b; 6a and 6b, form a series relation, characterized by the prefixes *δέ*. and *καί* in the propositions 4a-6b. These series are verses of a unity in style and content that form a parallel to the tradic formula: God-Lord-Spirit.⁴⁴ This is an ascription of the three concepts *χαρισμάτων* (*karunia*), *διακονιών* (*pelayanan*), *ἐνεργημάτων* (*pekerjaan*) to the Spirit, the Lord, and God. Interestingly, each series in propositions 4a-6b moves to a climax in proposition 7a. Therefore, the relation between p. 4a-6b and p.7a is a schema progression relation. The series in propositions 4a-6b reaches its climax in terms of the common interest in the revelatory gifts of the Spirit. This shows that the end of all revelations of the Spirit or gifts is for the common good.⁴⁵

The third proposition in the text of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 is found in propositions 8a-9c. This third part of the proposition has a close relationship with the second proposition. Proposition 8a-9c and proposition 4a-7a have a ground relation.⁴⁶ Propositions 4a-7a are the main propositions that are explained by the reasoning found on p. 8a-9c. The explanation of the main proposition from p. 4a-7a regarding the common importance of the Spirit's revelatory gifts is explained on p.8a-9c as follows, namely:

1. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom (cf. p.8a)
2. (and) to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit (cf. p.8b)
3. (and) to another faith by the same Spirit (cf. p. 8c)
4. (and) to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit (cf. p. 8d)
5. (and) to another the working of miracles (cf. p. 8e)

⁴⁴ Morris, *1 Corinthians (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries)*, 89.; Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: NIGTC*.

⁴⁵ Cf. Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plumer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (New York: C. Scribner's, 1911).

⁴⁶ Thomas R Schreiner, "Ground (G) Is the Main Proposition Which Is Then Explained with a Reason or Basis," in *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2011), 182.

6. (and) to another prophecy (cf. p. 8f)
7. (and) to another discerning of spirits (cf. p. 8g)
8. (and) to another divers kinds of tongues (cf. p. 8h)
9. (and) to another the interpretation of tongues. (cf. p. 8i)

Proposition 8a-8i is divided into nine series. Proposition 8a-8i reaches its climax at p. 9a-9b. Therefore, p. 8a-8i has a progression relation with p. 9a-9b. As for p. 9a-9b, it is a proposition that is divided into two series, namely:

1. But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit (cf. p.9a)
2. and he distributes them to each one (cf. p.9b)

This second series (p. 9b) has a Comparison (Cf) relation with proposition 9c. Proposition 9b is explained more specifically with a comparison statement on p. 9c, namely "as He wills".

Each series in propositions 8a-8i and 9a-9b is the ground of proposition 4a-7a. The nine series in propositions 8a-8i are the grounds of the main proposition 4a-7a concerning the common interest of the revelations of the Spirit. In this way, the Church with each person endowed with gifts ministers to one another:

The important point of the three propositions of the argumentation delivered by Paul to the Corinthians is seen in p. 1a, namely that the churches know the truth. The truth refers to the churches in possession of *των πνευματικων* or in English called "Spiritual Gifts". Carson states that this p. 1a is a crucial passage for the Corinthians

Social-and-Culture Texture

This section will outline the social and cultural texture of the text 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. The social and cultural texture is the interaction of the text with the society and culture in which the text is first read. This is important because the text is always in contact with the general social and cultural life, as well as the norms in the society of the reader of the text.⁴⁷ Therefore, in this section the author will analyze the social and cultural life of the people in the first century AD as indicated in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11.

⁴⁷ David B. Gowler, "Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation: Textures of a Text and Its Reception," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 33, no. 2 (December 26, 2010): 191–206, 195.

1 Corinthians seems to have been written as a response to the Corinthian Church writing to Paul about issues in the church.⁴⁸ Johnson believes that Paul was deeply concerned about the welfare of the church. Paul wrote to correct the non-Christian behavior that had manifested itself in the Corinthian community since Paul left more than two years earlier. Paul wanted to correct the problems in the Corinthian church through the letter of 1 Corinthians.⁴⁹ In addition, Fee also argues that 1 Corinthians is Paul's response letter to the problems that occurred around 51-52 AD by correcting the Corinthian areas that had gone astray.⁵⁰

In relation to socio-and-culture textures, Malina states that 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 is related to the social "patronage system".⁵¹ The Corinthians who lived in the context of Greco-Roman culture faced the culture of Patronage.⁵² Patronage relationships, also known as patron-client relationships, are exchange relationships.⁵³ In a patron-client relationship, the patron gives the client what he needs, and in turn gets from the client what he wants. Often, the favors provided by the patron are directly given in tangible goods.⁵⁴ Clients usually pay back more intangibles. They can, for example, publicize the patron's good name to people in the community.

In this sense, the patron-client relationship is no different from other exchange relationships such as friendship. This patron-client relationship was adopted by Paul for the Corinthians. The word "gifts" that appears in verse 4 comes from the Greek word

⁴⁸ John Coolidge Hurd, *The Origin of I Corinthians* (New York: Seabury, 1965), 65-74; Charles H Talbert, *Reading Corinthians: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2003), xiii-xiv; James D.G Dunn, *1 Corinthians* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 14.

⁴⁹ Alan F Johnson, *1 Corinthians: The IVP New Testament Commentary Series* (United State of America: Inter Varsity Press, 2004), 22-23.

⁵⁰ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians, Revised Edition (New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT), 4-5)*, 19.

⁵¹ Bruce J Malina, *Social-Science Commentary on the Letters of Paul* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 114.

⁵² Malina, 114.; Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 5; Davd A deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity* (United State of America: InterVarityPress(IVP), 2000), 50. Wayne A Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 40.

⁵³ Davd A deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity* (United State of America: InterVarityPress(IVP), 2000), 79.

⁵⁴ Eric R. Wolf, "Kinship, Friendship, and Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies," in *Pathways of Power Building an Anthropology of the Modern World* (University of California Press, 2001), 166-83, 99.

"Charisma". This charisma refers to the various results of God's patronage expressed in the gifts given by God to the Corinthians. A favor or gift (Greek: *Charis*; Latin: *gratia*) is something that a patron gives or does for a client in need of assistance. Those who have received the favor are obligated to obey the patron, defend the patron's honor in public, glorify the patron, and remain loyal to the patron. In this case, Corinth was the client and God was the patron. Charisma is a phenomenon related to the gifts of God given to the Corinthians.

Thiselton states that these gifts are "God Freely Gives", on His own initiative and in His own sovereign choice (cf. 1 Cor.12:11) as empowerment (energematōn, v.6) through the agency of the Holy Spirit for service to God and others (diakonion, v.5).⁵⁵ The gifts given are the sovereignty of the Giver. The Corinthians as recipients of the gifts should not debate the content of the gifts given. Karl Barth recognized that 1 Corinthians 12 displays a dazzling richness of spiritual life, but what is really concerned is not with the phenomena within, but with: "what" is to be shown? To what does it testify?⁵⁶

The Patron-Client phenomenon of gifts given to clients can be seen in the previous explanation in the third proposition. The various gifts given were clearly gifts from God as patron to the Corinthians as clients. We can see this in the second proposition. The God who gave "Spiritual Gifts" to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 is described by Paul as the Triune God.⁵⁷ This can be seen from the description by Paul in his rhetoric that forms parallelism, namely:⁵⁸

of gifts (Charismata,), but the same Spirit
of service (diakonia,), but the same Lord
of working (energemata,), but the same God

Paul's rhetoric is very interesting when describing the relationship of the Triune God. The Triune God has an intimate love relationship when the three persons relate and serve each other. This image is also conveyed by Paul to the Corinthian church, which has a variety of different spiritual gifts to serve each other. Thiselton states that "Trinitarian terms

⁵⁵ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: NIGTC*, 930.

⁵⁶ Karl Barth, *The Resurrection of the Dead* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2003), 80.

⁵⁷ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians, Revised Edition (New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT))*, 589.

⁵⁸ Carson, *Showing The Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14*, 32.

as the foundation of unity-in-diversity and diversity-in-unity".⁵⁹ Paul wanted the Corinthian churches to serve one another in the grace and power of the Triune God to glorify the Triune God who gives the gifts. All the gifts of the Triune God to the Corinthian churches were not given in order to boast and become prideful, which could divide the relationships of the Corinthian churches. What then was the real purpose? Paul in his rhetoric in proposition 7a states that the gifts were given for the purpose of "common advantage".⁶⁰

Sacred Texture

Sacred Texture refers to the way the text communicates something related to the relationship between human and divine.⁶¹ The relationship in question is between God and man, and this is especially true for Paul and the Corinthians. This part of the text presents a particular theological meaning.⁶² One of the important passages in 1 Corinthians 12:1-12 that contains sacred texture is about Christology.

There are two explanations of Christology in this text that Paul lays out, namely "Jesus be Cursed" and "Jesus Is Lord" (cf. p.3b-3c). Paul's exposition arose because of the divisive issues in the Corinthian church that considered there to be different classes of spiritual gifts. This Christology served as a test of the Corinthians' "spirituality".⁶³ The contrast between "Jesus be Cursed" and "Jesus is Lord" explains the Christological criterion of what it is like to experience the gifts of the Spirit. Bittlinger argues that this is an expression that seeks to separate the "historical Jesus" from the "pneumatized Jesus".⁶⁴

Paul in the matter of the Corinthian schism wanted the Corinthians to exalt Christ in the form of a full confession of Christ's lordship. This Christological confession seems to be related to "the service of God in life".⁶⁵ The confession of Jesus as Lord was important so that

⁵⁹ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: NIGTC*, 911.

⁶⁰ Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation*, 146.

⁶¹ Ibid, 130.

⁶² Ibid, 120.

⁶³ Walter J Barthling, "The Congregation of Christ-A Charismatic Body," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 40, no. 7 (1969): 67-81, 70.

⁶⁴ Arnold Bittlinger, *Gifts and Graces: A Commentary on 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1976), 17.

⁶⁵ Traugott Holtz, "Das Kennzeichen Des Geistes (1 Kor. XII. 1-3)," *New Testament Studies* 18, no. 3 (April 5, 1972): 365-376, 375 <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0028688500019494>.

the Corinthians would know that among the churches that had various gifts, none was higher than Christ.

Confessional Criticism is not only concerned with intellectual or right thinking but practical life in the church.⁶⁶ This confession had a practical influence on the life of the Corinthians in their division to serve Christ as Lord together. Cullmann proclaims the Christological confession of life setting.⁶⁷ Holtz and Neufeld argue that recognizing Jesus' divinity means actions, stances, and lifestyles.⁶⁸ While J. Weiss observes the meaning of Jesus' confession as Lord in a practical sense with regard to the relationship with Christ's servants or slaves.⁶⁹ Kennedy asserts that calling Jesus Lord is about "surrender, reverence, trust and grateful love".⁷⁰ It is clear that this confession of Christology is not only a confession of "right belief" but also of "right action" that the Corinthians should do in the church. This confession of Christ is what the church should have so that it focuses on glorifying and exalting Christ rather than being heard because of differences.

CONCLUSION

Through the use of Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation (SRI) with three textures, namely inner texture, social-and-culture texture and sacred-texture, the text of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 shows the phenomenon of church division in Corinth. This division occurred because of the absence of unity in church service as well as pride and self-interest in the gifts possessed. This would adversely affect the life of the church. Paul responded to this phenomenon by presenting his argument to the Corinthians to serve each other in the service of peace for the common good with the gifts possessed by each church member. Paul strengthened this argument by explaining to the Corinthians that their gifts were given by God, so they should respond by serving God. This explanation is an adoption of the culture at the time, namely the patronage system that Paul applied to the relationship between God and the church. In addition, Paul also strengthens his argument through the

⁶⁶ Margaret P Aymer, Cynthia B Kitredge, and David A Schez, "1 Corinthians," in *Fortress Commentary on the Bible: The New Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 233–303, 270.

⁶⁷ Oscar Cullmann, *The Earliest Christian Confessions* (London: Lutterworth Press, 2018), 13.

⁶⁸ Holtz, "Das Kennzeichen Des Geistes (1 Kor. XII. 1–3).", 373.

⁶⁹ Johannes Weiss, *Earliest Christianity* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1959), 448.

⁷⁰ H. A. A Kennedy, *The Theology of the Epistles* (London: Duckworth, 1919), 84.

confession of Christology that the congregation must have in thought and deed, so that whatever the congregation does is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. Through this research, it is hoped that churches in Indonesia can prevent church splits and bring peace, and if church splits have occurred, what Paul has done to the Corinthians in this text can be a solution for the church today.

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