

Name:

Date:

Period:

## "A Problem with Paul"

**Directions:** Use your Bible to fill in the blanks below.

---

**Paul's First letter to the Corinthians** is among the apostle's most significant and most often quoted writings. Of the many passages in the letter that have proven meaningful and relevant to Christians- and interesting to scholars- is 1 Corinthians 14, a chapter in which Paul discusses 'spiritual gifts' and the role of women in the church. To complete this worksheet, you must read 1 Corinthians 14, and then answer the questions below.

1. **First, read 1 Corinthians 12:27-30.** In this passage, Paul lists the various 'spiritual gifts' that a person in the church can possess (there are nine). Write them out *in the order that Paul lists them*, and number them.
  
2. **Read all of 1 Corinthians 14.** Most of this chapter deals with two of the spiritual gifts you listed above. What are they? Which of these two does Paul think is better, and why (list ALL the reasons you can find)?
  
3. **Now, read chapter 14 again,** but this time read it even more closely. There is one section of this chapter that discusses women in the church. Where is it (give chapter and verses)?

Does this passage say anything about the spiritual gifts mentioned elsewhere in this chapter? If so, what? If not, what does it discuss?

4. **Now, read 1 Corinthians 11:1-16.** Here again, Paul mentions one of the spiritual gifts. Which one is it?

What does Paul say about women in the church in this passage?

Does Paul say anything here that disagrees with what he says in chapter 14? If so, what is it? If not, what is he saying?

5. **Now consider a passage from Paul's letter to the Galatians 3:23-29.** Specifically in verse 28, what does Paul say about all those who are "one in Christ Jesus"?

Does this seem consistent with the other passages you have read? If so, how? If not, why?

6. **Finally, consider a passage from Romans 16:1-7.** In this passage, Paul greets a person named Junia. Interestingly, the passage suggests that Paul believed Junia possessed one of the spiritual gifts you listed above. Which one?

Now, read the footnote on 16:7. According to the note, what gender is Junia?

Why do you think some interpreters have chosen to change the name to "Junias"- and therefore change the gender?

Do you think they are correct in doing so? Why or why not?

7. **Worth considering:** Some Christian churches believe that the passage in 1 Corinthians prohibits women from serving as priests or ministers, or from speaking in church at all. Do you think Paul would agree with these churches? Why or why not?