

THE GIFTS AND POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Teacher's Ed.)

We take a break from our passage through the Bible to study an important topic that is misunderstood in the body of Christ. As we see in a simple reading of 1 Corinthians, we are **mandated by God** to earnestly desire spiritual gifts; that is, we are to pursue (and in the Greek text of 1 Corinthians 14:1 there is **equal emphatic** emphasis) **both** the gifts of the Spirit and the spirit in which the gifts should be used, which is love. The backdrop of this study is the understanding that Paul's instruction to the Corinthians was not **to stop** the move of the Spirit, but rather to **correct** their lack **of love** as they pursued being used in ways God grants every believer to be used. Paul was offering wonderful guidelines that every believer or gathering could look to to discern if they were in obedience to God's intentions in the outpouring of His Spirit.

Without a doubt, the pouring out of God's Spirit, known as the **Pentecostal Revival**, of the early 1900s, and the **Charismatic Renewal**, which had its beginnings in the early 1950s, together constitute one of the most powerful and impacting spiritual renovations in world history. Indeed, at the beginning of 1900 only **1 in 27** people on earth were Christian of any sort. With the church's renewed vision to obey the command of Jesus in Luke 24:49 to wait on Him until power came **for witness**, and with the outpouring of the Spirit (and with Him all His supernatural gifts), we began the new millennium with **1 in 5** on earth claiming some form of allegiance to Christ! That is why many have named this past century The Pentecostal Century. To clarify what has become confusing to this rationalistic, Christian generation in America, we will begin our study of the Holy Spirit's power and gifts by asking two questions: 1) Why the outpouring, and 2) How can Spiritual integrity be maintained?

To answer the first question, we must realize that the Church needed, and in a regular sense still needs, a regular **renewal of mission** and **purpose**.

We must all (corporately and individually) seek to go back to authentic Christianity as we see it lived out in the Book of Acts. This Christianity obeyed the command of Jesus to make disciples of the nations to the degree that they were accused of turning the world upside down!

In view of this need for renewal, there has been a definite move on the part of sincere believers to recover **the power of the Holy Spirit** that is demonstrated in Acts. In this pursuit to be empowered and transformed by the Spirit in order to make Jesus known to the world, a movement began through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, accompanied by **speaking in tongues**, among believers in every **denomination**. This demonstrated that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a denominational thing, fringe

movement, or emotional experience, but rather an **endowment of spiritual power** for **intensive service**.

This Pentecostal/Charismatic movement is a manifestation of the person of the Holy Spirit at work. It is also the byproduct of accounts in Acts being rediscovered and applied by God's Church.

The Book of Acts provides five accounts of people receiving the fullness or infilling or baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4; 8:14-25; 9:17-20; 10:44-48; 19:1-7). In all these accounts, there are **five common factors**:

1. There was an enormous inbreaking of God's presence experienced **by all who were present**.
2. There was an **evident transformation** in the lives and witness of the disciples who were filled.
3. What they experienced in the baptism of the Spirit became the impetus for **church growth** as they **preached** every day, everywhere, with **miracles** confirming their message.
4. The **immediate** evidence of their filling was **praying in tongues**, either seen directly in all these texts, or in the people after their experience.
5. The ultimate purpose of this experience was **empowered witnessing** (Acts 1:8) and a **deeper dimension of Christian commitment** for the achievement of happiness (Ephesians 5:18, 19), gratitude (Ephesians 5:20), humility (Ephesians 5:21), and **fruitfulness** (Galatians 5:22-23).

Together the above facts demonstrate what the present Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal is experiencing through the Holy Spirit at work in the church. The problems that exist regarding this move of the Spirit arise from a lack of biblical knowledge on the part of many believers regarding the role of "tongues" and the other gifts of the Spirit. We need, in our pursuit of Christian maturity, to develop a common bond of unity in the practice of "speaking with tongues" in prayer and worship, together with an acceptance and welcoming of the operation of the Holy Spirit's gifts in our midst.

How can spiritual integrity be maintained?

In other words, how can we flow with God's Spirit and honor His Word without excess or abuse? First let's offer some perspective.

The baptism in the Spirit is an experience **subsequent to getting born-again**: one that comes about through a process of **yielding one's complete self** into the guidance and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We agree that the Holy Spirit is operative in **every believer** and in the varied ministries of the church. Still, every believer must answer the question of **Acts 19:2**: "Did you receive the Holy Spirit since you believed?"

We must qualify two statements. By “baptism in the Spirit” we do not mean the baptism of the Spirit into the Body of Christ upon conversion (1 Corinthians 12:13). The baptism in/with the Holy Spirit (John 1:33; Acts 1:5, Mark 1:8) was and is **directed by Jesus** to be received (John 20:22; Acts 1:8) as a gift given following His ascension (John 7:39; Acts 2:38, 39). To baptize means, “**to immerse in so as to change the character of**”. That is the baptism in/with the Spirit!

The second statement to clarify is what we mean by, “*A process of yielding one’s complete self into the guidance and indwelling of the Holy Spirit*”.

We do not mean **passivity of mind** or getting into **a trance**! We simply refer to an assertive, prayerful heartfelt quest for God! The **mind** is active in worship, the **emotions** are warmed by God’s love, and the **physical** participates cognitively as worship is expressed with an upraised voice. Before we get into a study of tongues, to complete our backdrop and maintain our biblical integrity, we must offer the following:

Often, people make the comment that not everyone will have gifts or speak or pray in tongues. The problem arises from attempting to **separate the person** of the Spirit from **all His attributes**. In 1 Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul states that **everyone** is given **the manifestation** of the Spirit. The gifts, ministries and effects of the Spirit are merely an expression of **the one Spirit** who is already in the believer who **has received** the infilling! If you have the Spirit and He has you, how can you not have all that comes with Him? The believer filled with the Spirit has resident within him incredible power and gifts, and has the responsibility to do what we have already stated earlier from 1 Corinthians 14:1- desire the **spiritual sensitivity to be used** in the gifts for the benefit of the Body.

Now let’s look at the gifts themselves, beginning with the most misunderstood: tongues.

The twofold function of the gift of tongues

The bible describes two basic functions of “tongues”: it is for **personal edification** and **public exhortation**. [We must also note, though, that the early church clearly saw the ability to pray in tongues as **the sign of the presence** of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said it would be a sign (Mark 16:17), as did Paul (1 Corinthians 14:22), and Peter (see Acts 10:44-46 with 11:16-17 & 15:7-9). Thus, speaking in tongues is a properly expected **indication of the fullness of the Spirit.**]

Tongues for personal edification. “Speaking in tongues” is a **devotional help** to the believer who is “weak and does not know how to pray as He should” (**Romans 8:26, 27**). When praying **to God** this devotional use of tongues need not be interpreted. This is also true when the church gathers. At times of corporate worship and intercession, when all speech

is directed **toward God**, it is appropriate to address God in this Holy Spirit given form of expression. In line with this, here are the Biblical reasons for speaking in tongues:

- 1) **It is a unique gift associated with the Body of Christ.** All the other gifts, miracles and manifestations were in evidence prior to Pentecost during OT times. God uniquely ordains this gift for the church. (1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:21)
- 2) **It is a specific fulfillment of prophecies by Isaiah and Jesus.** See Isaiah 28:11 with 1 Corinthians 14:21, Mark 16:17 with Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6; 1 Corinthians 14:5, 14-18, 39.
- 3) **It is proof of the resurrection of Jesus.** John 16:7; Acts 2:26-33.
- 4) **It is evidence of the infilling of the Spirit.** See above paragraph.
- 5) **It is a spiritual gift for necessary self-edification.** 1 Corinthians 14:4; Jude 20.
- 6) **When directed as speech to others, and accompanied by interpretation, it spiritually edifies the church.** 1 Corinthians 14:5
- 7) **It is a spiritual means of rejoicing.** 1 Corinthians 14: 15; Ephesians 5:18-19.
- 8) **It is one confirmation of the Word when it is preached.** Mark 16: 17, 20; 1 Corinthians 14:22.

Tongues for public exhortation. Considering our discussion above, we need not take long for this. Public “tongues” denotes when the person who is speaking in other tongues is doing it in such a way as to be **addressing people**, not God. For example, this occurs during corporate gatherings when there is a general quiet in the congregation and one person begins to raise their voice and speak in the Spirit and no one else does. It is clearly designed as a **message to the people**. To maintain spiritual integrity and honor the Word, this **must be interpreted**. It is only through interpretation that “public tongues” can be edifying and not out of order. It is of utmost importance to note that “the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets” (1 Corinthians 14:32). In other words, each Spirit-filled believer can exercise **self-control** and not **disrupt a gathering** because they just couldn’t stop themselves. Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way (**1 Corinthians 14:40**).

AND NOW, THE OTHER GIFTS!

“Tongues” is not the end of the gifts; it is **only the beginning!** Believers need to get past this gift and yield themselves to God to be used in every way He desires to use them!

To understand all the gifts mentioned in the NT, some clarification of the distinct role the Trinity plays in giving gifts would be helpful.

Our existence is given by **the Father** who also gave **His Son Jesus** who Himself is the Redeemer, the giver of eternal life. **The Father and Son** together have jointly sent the **Holy Spirit** as the **administrator** of the Kingdom of God on earth in order to advance the work of redemption. He does this through the church's ministry of **worship, growth, and evangelism**.

In sequence, then, we find in Romans 12:3-8 **gifts given by God as Father**. These gifts characterize basic "**motivations**"; that is, inherent tendencies that characterize a person's initial ministry as the result of their initial gifting. What is important to understand is that there are only seven giftings mentioned and **none** of them **completely define** any one person. The reason for this is that as time passes and we mature, God uses each of us in a **number of these giftings**- sometimes in several of them in one day! Certainly each of us may have a **dominant trait** but we must be ready at all times to be used in different ways.

In 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, **the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit** are listed. Their purpose is specific: to "profit" the church. The word means, "**to bring together, to benefit, to be advantageous**", all of which is experienced by the church through fellowship and evangelism. These gifts are to be actively welcomed, pursued and expected.

Finally we see in Ephesians 4:7-16 **the gifts the Son has given**. These are given to assure that the first two groupings are applied in the church. Jesus has set these "**office gifts**" in the church to equip the body by assisting each person to perceive **the place** the Father has made Him to fill, and to **receive the power** of the Spirit and respond to His gifts in order to expand each believer's capabilities beyond the natural. Soul winning is, after all, a miracle business.

In order to understand all these we conclude our study with a great outline from the Hayford Bible Handbook:

Romans 12:3-8: Gifts of the Father (Life Purpose & Motivation)

1) PROPHECY

- a) To speak with **forthrightness and insight**, especially when enabled by the Spirit.
- b) To demonstrate moral boldness and uncompromising commitment to holiness and worthy values.
- c) To influence others in one's sphere with a positive spirit of social or spiritual righteousness.

2) SERVING

- a) To minister and render loving care to meet the needs of others.
 - b) It is illustrated in the work and office of **the deacon**.
- 3) **TEACHING**
- a) The supernatural ability to explain and apply the truths received from God for the church.
 - b) It assumes **study and the Spirit's** illumination in providing the ability to make divine truth clear.
- 4) **ENCOURAGEMENT/EXHORTATION**
- a) Literally means to call aside for the purpose of making an appeal
 - b) Also means to entreat, comfort, or instruct.
- 5) **GIVING**
- a) It essential means to give out of a spirit of generosity.
 - b) It also speaks to those with resources aiding those without them.
 - c) This gift must be used without outward **show or pride** and with liberality.
- 6) **LEADERSHIP**
- a) Refers to the one “standing in front.”
 - b) Involves the exercise of the Spirit in modeling, superintending, and developing the Body of Christ. This must be **done with diligence**.
- 7) **MERCY**
- a) To feel sympathy with the misery of another.
 - b) To relate to others in empathy, respect, and honesty.
 - c) To be effective, this gift is ministered with kindness and cheerfulness- not as a matter of duty.

1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

- 1) **WORD OF WISDOM**
- a) Supernatural perspective to ascertain the divine means for **accomplishing God's will** in given situations.
 - b) Divinely given power to appropriate spiritual intuition in problem solving.
 - c) Receiving divine direction regarding divine input- Holy Spirit leading in a given set of circumstances.
- 2) **WORD OF KNOWLEDGE**
- a) Supernatural knowledge of the divine will and plan.
 - b) Supernatural insight of circumstances or **a body of facts**. This is without the assistance of any **human resource**.
- 3) **FAITH**
- a) Supernatural ability to believe God without doubt. I.e., **to have God's faith for something**.

- b) Supernatural ability to meet adverse circumstances with total trust in God's messages and words.
- 4) **GIFTS OF HEALINGS**
 - a) Refers to supernatural healing without human aid. Plural because each healing of a different disease is considered a different gift.
- 5) **WORKING OF MIRACLES**
 - a) Supernatural power to intervene and counteract earthly and evil forces.
 - b) A display of power giving the ability to suspend the laws of nature.
 - c) Operates closely with the gifts of faith and healings to bring authority over sin, Satan, sickness, and the binding forces of this age.
- 6) **PROPHECY**
 - a) Divinely inspired and anointed utterance.
 - b) Supernatural proclamation in **a known language**.
 - c) It is not **intellectually based** although intellect, faith and will are in operation. It is calling forth words from the Spirit of God.
- 7) **DISCERNING OF SPIRITS**
 - a) Supernatural power to detect the realm of the spirits and their operation.
 - b) Also implies supernatural revelation **of plans and purposes** of the enemy and his forces.
- 8) **DIFFERENT KINDS OF TONGUES**
 - a) Supernatural utterance in languages not known to the speaker.
 - b) Serve as an evidence and sign of the indwelling and working of the Holy Spirit.
- 9) **INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES**
 - a) Supernatural power to reveal the meaning of tongues.
 - b) Functions not as an operation of the mind of man but the mind of God.
 - c) It is not a **translation** but an **interpretation**: a declaration of meaning.

EPHESIANS 4:11: Gifts of the Son (To facilitate and equip the Church)

- 1) **APOSTLES**
 - a) Originally referred to the original 12.
 - b) Refers to those who can remarkably extend the work of the church, opening fields to the gospel, and planting churches, and overseeing larger sections of the Body.
- 2) **PROPHET**

a) A spiritual mature spokesman/proclaimer with a special, divinely focused message to the church or world. This person can be gifted at times with insight into future events.

3) **EVANGELIST**

a) Refers primarily to a special gift of preaching or witnessing in a way that brings unbelievers into the experience of salvation.

b) This gift operates for the **establishment of new works** while pastors and teachers follow up to organize and sustain them.

4) **PASTOR/TEACHER**

a) The word “pastor” comes from a root meaning “**to protect**” from which we get the word **shepherd**.

b) Implies the function of a shepherd/leader to **nurture, teach, and care for** the spiritual needs of the body.