

# *Gifts from God*

## **- Foundational Statement -**

As we begin this study on spiritual gifts it is important to have a good foundation from which to begin. So we will be using 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 as our basis. *Now there are varieties of **gifts**, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of **ministries**, and the same Lord. There are varieties of **effects**, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to **each one** is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.* In viewing this passage of Scripture we discover four very important truths.

1. **Every** Christian is capable of manifesting the Holy Spirit for the common good.
2. The Holy Spirit works through Christians in different ways to accomplish God's will, to reveal His power and glory, to attract non-believers and to edify the Body of Christ. We will refer to this type of gifting as **manifestations**.
3. The Lord Jesus Christ provides every Christian with a primary channel (outlet or ministry) for serving within the Body of Christ. We will refer to this type of gifting as **ministries**.
4. The Father gives every Christian a primary desire (effects ... heart, driving force or motive) to serve within the Body of Christ. We will refer to this type of gifting as **motivations**.

## **- Why Spiritual Gifts -**

Parents give gifts to their children because they love them. They like to see the joy that gifts bring when their children receive them. And it truly delights parents to see the gifts being used by their children. God is no different!

In fact, gift-giving fits the entire Christian message, which is built around the concept of grace or unmerited favor. It's all about the wonderful God who loves people so much that He chose to give them gifts (charisma). For example, all of the following are gifts (charisma):

1. God, the Father gave us the gift of His only begotten Son.
2. Jesus, the Son gave us the gift of the Holy Spirit.
3. The Holy Spirit gave us spiritual gifts.
4. *But to each one of us grace (charis) was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high, he led captive a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men." (Ephesians 4:7-8)*

## **- When Are Spiritual Gifts Given -**

The question as to when spiritual gifts are given is an easy one to answer. Just ask yourself, "When you would give gifts to your children?" Your reply would probably be something like this: 1) at some special event, 2) when you wanted to, 3) when you thought they might need them or 4) when they asked for them.

God does it pretty much the same way. Following are some examples of this:

1. At some **special** event.
  - *Peter said to them, “ Repent, and each of you be **baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)*
2. When He **wants** to.
  - *But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as **He wills**. (1 Corinthians 12:11)*
3. When they **need** them.
  - *For while we were still helpless, **at the right time** Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were yet sinners**, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:6-8)*
4. When they **ask** for them.
  - ***Ask**, and it shall be given you. (Luke 11:9)*
  - *For everyone who **asks**, receives. (Luke 11:10)*
  - *If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who **ask**<sup>1</sup> Him? (Luke 11:13)*

## - Definitions and Clarification -

Throughout the New Testament, the Greek word “charisma” is used for spiritual gifts. The word itself means “**favor**” and denotes a gift freely and graciously given, a favor bestowed or a grace. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century a new term was coined from the Greek word charisma for a particular type of believer within the Body of Christ: a charismatic – one who believes in and uses spiritual gifts.

A spiritual gift is anything that **belongs** to God, who by His own free will chooses to give to an individual or a group of individuals for their benefit. It is **not** something that is inherent within any individual such as: natural talents, intellect, something he has learned or a skill he has developed. Otherwise it would not be something belonging to God ... it already belongs to the individual. Spiritual gifts, like any other gifts have several things in common in order to be **effective**. They are:

1. The gift must be **received**,
2. It must be used for its intended **purpose**, and
3. Has **rules** governing its use.

\*\*\* Offer a pen to the group by telling them, “I am giving this pen away, who would like to have it?” Then purposely wait for someone to come and get it. After one person takes possession of the pen, discuss the three things that make the pen effective.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the Scripture the word “ask” carries with it the idea of being a continuous action. In other words, “keep on asking”!

# *Questions about Spiritual Gifts*

## **- Do Spiritual Gifts Still Exist -**

The evidence of the existence of spiritual gifts can clearly be seen in both the Old and New Testaments of our Bible. And even a cursory study of church history, from the Church's inception until the present day, clearly shows the existence of spiritual gifts in use throughout the entire period of time. It should be noted that supernatural signs and wonders also have accompanied every major revival.

It appears from church history that with the rise of a hierarchal form of church government (**control**) and clergy (**professional ministry**) the **recorded** use of spiritual gifts declined. Undoubtedly there were many reasons for this. I have listed three primary reasons for the decline, which have historically existed in the church and are still prevalent today.

1. When men, not Christ, act as if they are the head of a church, they grieve the Holy Spirit and tend to quench spiritual gifts.
2. In an effort to prevent potential abuses of spiritual gifts and loss of control, leadership sometimes restricts use of spiritual gifts to the trained clergy.
3. There also has been a lack of teaching and training for both clergy and lay members alike.

## **- Why Do Some Believe That God Has Done Away With Spiritual Gifts -**

The **idea** that God has done away with the spiritual gifts was developed primarily in the 19<sup>th</sup> century through the initial efforts of one man, John Nelson Darby, the father of **dispensational** theology. Several groups within Christianity hold to the dispensational view of theology, foremost among them in sheer numbers are the Baptists.

Most of those who hold to this form of theology believe that spiritual gifts ceased to exist with the development of the New Testament canon of Scripture, which was ratified at the Council of Carthage in 397 AD. The justification for their belief usually comes from their understanding of I Corinthians 13:10, "*But when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.*" They interpret "the perfect comes" in this passage to mean the arrival of the New Testament.

However, most Christian's hold that, "the perfect comes" refers to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. *Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. (1 John 3:2)* Another Scripture alluding to that fact is Ephesians 4:12-13. "*To the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.*" This entire passage is referring to the **necessity** of spiritual gifts until **all** Christians attain to the unity of faith, knowledge of

Christ and spiritual maturity. At this point in time Christians certainly have not attained to any of these.

When dispensationalists are pressed on their viewpoint concerning spiritual gifts an oddity arises: they tend to pick and choose which spiritual gifts have been done away with. For example, in the Romans list of spiritual gifts (Romans 12:6-8), they exclude prophesying, but retain serving, teaching, exhortation, contributing, governing and mercy. In the Ephesians list of spiritual gifts (Ephesians 4:11-14), they exclude apostle and prophet but retain evangelist, pastor and teacher. Also odd, is that while they believe in a supernatural God, they insist that all the supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 have ceased. Yet they continue to pray for wisdom, guidance, healings and divine intervention from God.

Perhaps the strangest contradiction regarding the cessation of spiritual gifts by dispensational theology itself, involves its founder, John Nelson Darby. He believed in prophetic utterances! One of the primary tenants<sup>2</sup> of dispensational theology is the now popular end-time view of a pre-tribulation rapture of the Church. The roots of Mr. Darby's end-time view can be traced to a series of prophetic conferences he attended at Ireland's Powerscourt House during 1830. At one of the meetings, a young woman named Margaret McDonald gave the specific prophetic utterance<sup>3</sup> from which he derived his viewpoint.

### **- Do Spiritual Gifts Only Reside In Special People -**

No. It is possible for **every** Christian to have one or more spiritual gifts. In fact the apostle Paul told Christians that they should earnestly desire spiritual gifts. (1 Corinthians 14:1) The Scripture also says, *When you assemble, **each one** has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. (1Corinthians 14:26)*

### **- Do Some Christians Have More Spiritual Gifts than Others -**

Yes, but this answer needs to be qualified. **Every** Christian has the Holy Spirit, who is the possessor of **all** the gifts. It is the Holy Spirit who chooses the number of gifts, types and particular manifestations given to each individual.

It appears that the Holy Spirit **might** give gifts based on an individual's calling or need for them. For example, the apostle Paul exhibited many gifts throughout his life as they related to his needs in doing the work of the ministry. As for receiving more gifts, it appears that the Holy Spirit **might** withhold additional gifts if an individual isn't faithfully using what he has already been given.

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<sup>2</sup> "Backgrounds To Dispensationalism" – Clarence B. Bass (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. – 1960)

<sup>3</sup> Margaret McDonald's handwritten account of this prophecy can be viewed online as "Appendix A of The Incredible Cover-up," by Dave MacPherson (Logos International – 1975)

## - What Are the Manifestation Gifts for - (Signs and Wonders)

The manifestation gifts (**signs and wonders**) are primarily given to Christians to **assist** them in doing the work of the ministry to which they have been called.

1. **Edification...** the building up of the body of Christ, which includes the person or persons using the gift.

*What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. (1 Corinthians 14:26)*

2. **Witnessing Tools...** they are unforgettable “gospel tracts”.

*And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God. (1 Corinthians 2:4-5)*

*And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness. (Acts 4:29-31)*

3. **Signs...** for believers and non-believers.

*So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophecy is for a sign, not to unbelievers but to those who believe. (1 Corinthians 14:22)*

Tongues are a sign for non-believers. (Surely God **dwells** in them or they would not be able to speak in unlearned languages)

- At the tower of Babel, when the people spoke one language God miraculously gave them tongues.
- At Mt. Sinai, when God gave the Ten Commandments, He spoke it out loud in the tongues of the seventy nations.
- On the Day of Atonement, when the High Priest ministered to God before the Ark of the Covenant, he spoke in tongues.
- On the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), when the Holy Spirit came upon the believers, they all spoke in tongues.

Prophecy is a sign for believers. (The Lord **leads** Christians in the paths of righteousness)

- God sent prophets to the nation of Israel to speak to them and bless them.
- *These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover. (Mark 16:17-18)*

The book of Acts testifies that signs and wonders did accompany believers and they were being used by different groups of people.

- Jews
- Samaritans
- Paul
- Gentiles (Romans, Ephesians and Corinthians)

## **- Didn't the Apostle Paul Rebuke the Church at Corinth For Their Use of Spiritual Gifts -**

Not specifically. The reason that Paul rebuked the Corinthian church was that they were **behaving** carnally... following their fleshly natures and not the Holy Spirit. They lacked unity. The divisions and quarrels within the body of believers evidenced their carnality. He addressed the issues concerning their divisions and gave them proper **protocol** to follow in order to keep the divisions from occurring. There were at least fifteen separate issues that were causing divisions within the church:

1. Quarrels over who they belonged to (Peter, Paul, Apollos, Christ, etc).
2. Boasting.
3. Toleration of immoral people within the congregation.
4. Going to civil court against one another.
5. Marriage.
6. Things sacrificed to idols.
7. Rights of those who are serving in ministry.
8. Self-control.
9. Idolatry.
10. The proper way to pray in public.
11. The Lord's Supper (communion or breaking bread).
12. Importance of spiritual gifts.
13. Loving others.
14. The proper use of spiritual gifts (manifestations).
15. The resurrection of Christ and believers.

After finishing this list you find that the Corinthian church wasn't much different than most churches in the United States today. Except that the Corinthians didn't argue over which style of music they preferred. I think we can be thankful for the Corinthians carnality because it gave the apostle an opportunity to address issues of conduct that apply to our lives as Christians in today's world. *And we know that God causes all things*

*to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)*

## **- Are There Abuses (Misuses) Of Spiritual Gifts -**

Yes! Let me begin by saying that the gifts and calling<sup>4</sup> of God are irrevocable (Romans 11:29). In other words, God doesn't change His mind about His calling of anyone and He won't take back a gift once He has given it to someone. With that said, let me use an illustration that will help you understand.

Let's say that God wants you to be a fisherman (His calling) and gives you a fishing pole and the tackle (His gifts) to help you catch fish. You now have some **choices** to make.

- Are you willing to be trained to fish?
- After you know how to fish, will you go fishing?
- If you need different tackle to fish with, will you ask God for it?
- When you go fishing are you going to take your fishing-pole and tackle with you or leave it sitting in the corner?
- Will you use your fishing-pole to fish with or will you use it as a "show and tell" item or a pointer or an instrument to whip people into shape?
- After becoming a fisherman are you going to quit being a fisherman?

Let me end my point by asking you a question, "Will you respond to God's calling on your life, become skillful and then faithfully and properly use the gifts that God has given you? We can never gauge what another person will do with his or her gift but we can take responsibility for what we do with our own.

## **- Can People "Fake" Using Spiritual Gifts And If So How Can I Tell -**

Yes, Spiritual gifts have the potential of being faked, some more easily than others. For example it might be easier to say God said something, than turn a river to blood. How do you tell? You as an individual might have difficulty telling whether a person is faking or not, but God has given the Church safeguards to follow for their protection. Faking spiritual gifts can fall under two broad categories:

1. Those who **attempt** to deceive: (these individuals need to be revealed, as their motives are impure and maybe even demonic. Some of their motives might be: for personal gain, control over others, acceptance by a group, etc.)
2. Those who **unintentionally** deceive: (these individuals need to be gently corrected, as their motives might be pure. They may not fully understand how the Holy Spirit works through them, or have become over-emotional, etc.)

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<sup>4</sup> God's calling is 1) His choice of an individual and 2) what He wants them to become in Christ.

There are several safeguards that should be employed:

1. Pay attention – look at the **fruit** of the gift. Is it good or bad?
  - Does it line up with Scripture?
  - Does it draw believers closer to their heavenly Father?
  - Who gets the glory?
  - True spiritual gifts edify and build up. However, that doesn't mean you will always have a warm and fuzzy feeling when it is being manifested. (E.g.. a rebuke)
2. Is there a confirmation? Are there two or more witnesses?
  - One of the best people to have in the congregation is an individual who has the gift of discerning of spirits. They can distinguish between an individual's spirit, the Holy Spirit and a demonic spirit.
  - The body of believers should judge every prophetic word given.
  - The apostle Paul said, *"Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit." (1Corinthians 12:3)*
3. Orderly conduct should be maintained when using spiritual gifts. Our God is not a god of confusion.
4. Has the individual using the gift been involved with demonic activity?
5. Practice Christian discipline as outlined by Jesus in Luke 17:3-4 and Matthew 18:15-18.

### **- Because Spiritual Gifts Have the Potential To Be Faked Should I Avoid Them -**

No, just **utilize** the safeguards! Now let me ask you a couple of questions. Is everyone in your church a Christian or are some faking? Should you stop assembling together because some might be faking or should you be wary and utilize the safeguards?

### **- Should We Be Allowing People To Use Their Spiritual Gifts -**

Yes, if it is done in an **orderly** fashion. Now let me respond with this: Why wouldn't you want someone to use their spiritual gifts since God gave them the gifts in the first place, the gifts build people up and it is the Holy Spirit being manifested through them?

### **- Are Their Weird Things Going On In Churches -**

Some people ask this question when they hear about unusual happenings in a church service such as: 1) People laughing uncontrollably, 2) barking like dogs, 3) roaring like lions and 4) running up and down the aisles waving their arms? For any Christian who was not in attendance at a meeting in which events like these occurred it is difficult to discern whether it is a work of the Holy Spirit or not. At times some people in attendance at meetings become so emotionally charged or roused by the music and preaching that



they begin behaving in uncharacteristic ways and some, like sheep, just follow along. Some of those in attendance say they are blessed by the events, but for Christianity as a whole it isn't edifying. To most it appears out of order and causes confusion and suspicion about spiritual gifts.

A word of caution is in order however. The Bible does say that a joyful heart is "good medicine" (Proverbs 17:22). David danced wildly before the Ark of the Covenant (2 Samuel 6:16). And it has been historically recorded that during revivals people acted strangely and made noises like dogs and lions as various spirits manifested when people began committing their lives to the Lord.

## - Why Are There So Much Fear, Doubt And Confusion Surrounding Spiritual Gifts -

This is an easy one ... it is called **spiritual warfare** and occurs when the Kingdom of God confronts the Kingdom of Satan. Ask yourself these questions:

- What is the **source** of **fear** arising around the issues of receiving and using spiritual gifts? Certainly not God since He's giving the gifts to begin with! *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)*
- What is the greatest **enemy** of faith? **Doubt!** *Have faith in God. Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and **does not doubt in his heart**, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him. Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you. (Mark 11:22-24)*
- Who wants you to be **confused** and **upset** about spiritual gifts? Satan! *God is not a God of confusion but of peace. (1 Corinthians 14:33)*

## - Can Satan Counterfeit Spiritual Gifts -

Counterfeit might not be the best word to use. Let's begin by saying that Satan can perform signs and wonders. The Scripture points to this in 2 Thessalonians 2:9, *the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan,<sup>5</sup> with all power and signs and false (lying) wonders*. Did you notice that the Scripture said false or lying wonders? According to John 8:4, Satan is a liar and the father of lies. Therefore, his signs and wonders will be contradictory to God's.

We'll cite two notable cases of this found in Scripture.

1. God sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh seeking the release of the Israelites. When Aaron's staff was thrown to the ground it became a snake. Pharaoh's wise men, Jannes and Jambres also threw their staffs on the ground and they in turn became snakes. However, Aaron's snake swallowed their two snakes. (Exodus 7:8-13)

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<sup>5</sup> Satan means: "the adversary" or "the one who opposes".

2. The second case concerns a young slave girl who was possessed by a spirit of divination who was following the apostle Paul. She testified, saying, *“These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.”* After several days of this Paul cast the spirit out of her in the name of Jesus. (Acts 16:16-24)

Did you notice that in both cases, God’s gifts being used by His chosen ones were imitated? And it is those, who have God’s gifts that are to be aware of and oppose the false signs and wonders.

### **- Who Should Teach On Spiritual Gifts -**

Probably no one who believes they don’t exist and has never experienced any himself! That’s kind of like someone from the 16<sup>th</sup> century telling you how to operate a car. He doesn’t believe cars exist and has never operated one. Then how would he be able to tell you about cars or how to operate one? Much confusion surrounding spiritual gifts has come from teachers who don’t believe they still exist and have **never** experienced any manifestations of the spirit.

### **- How Does a Believer Acquire Spiritual Gifts -**

There are three general ways in which spiritual gifts are acquired:

1. God sovereignly gives them, in which case an individual discovers he has them.
2. It may be requested from God. *If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him! (Matthew 7:11)*
3. Through impartation by others through the laying on of hands. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. (1 Timothy 4:14)

### **- Can I Tell When the Anointing of the Holy Spirit Comes Upon Someone -**

The term “anointing of the Holy Spirit” is just another way of saying that there is a strong presence of God being manifested. There certainly isn’t any sure-fire Biblical way to tell it is happening, other than the manifestations themselves. However, over the years believers have noticed some signs that it might be occurring. Some have likened it to a dove gently descending from above or others like oil being poured out on the head of the individual. Most of the signs that appeared were associated with the **head**.

- Fluttering of the eyelashes.
- An appearance of engagement with God.
- A ‘sheen’ on the face.
- Flushes around the neck.
- Feeling of heat.
- Shaking or trembling.

- Deep-breathing.
- Weeping – even very gently.
- Laughing.
- Peace.
- Falling or even bouncing on the floor.

## **- Does an Individual Lose Control of Himself In The Use of Spiritual Gifts -**

Not if he doesn't want to. Receiving the Holy Spirit, letting an anointing come upon you or exercising a spiritual gift are always under the individual's control. Since it is a gift being offered by God to the individual, he has the right to **receive** it or not. Once the individual receives it... he and the Holy Spirit start operating together, kind of like singing a duet... the two become one. When working in harmony, the Holy Spirit is very gentle but extremely powerful at the same time. And there is no doubt about whose singing lead ... the individual is just going along for the ride. And when it's over, the individual knows that it was God doing His thing and that he... the individual has nothing to boast about.

As a word of encouragement let me say that throughout the years I have resisted or refused the Holy Spirit several times. Most of them centered around one issue... my pride. What would people think? What if I was wrong? What if God didn't come through? How would I look? And on and on and on! After rejecting the Holy Spirit's offer I was always disappointed. But do you know what? He's still comes to me with new opportunities for which I'm thankful... because He loves me and is patient with me.

## **- What Should I Do If I Blow It When Operating In My Spiritual Gifting -**

Pretty much the same thing you do when you make any mistake in your Christian life. Humble yourself by assuming a child-like attitude, accept correction, get up and **go** again.

## **- Do You Have Any Concerns about Issues Involving Spiritual Gifts -**

My primary concern is that Christians do not quench the Holy Spirit. This occurs by hindering the use of spiritual gifts in a variety of ways. I believe this shows a flagrant disregard and lack of reverence for God who gave us the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us.

By doing so indicates that the person quenching the Holy Spirit is **not** sensitive to hearing God's voice and obeying Him. These people prefer their own will and ways of doing things to God's. In fact, some of those who disregard spiritual gifts may not even be "born again". It's just as the apostle Paul says, *But a natural man* (one who does not have the Holy Spirit) *does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to*

*him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised (discerned). (1 Corinthians 2:14)*

A secondary concern is that Christians tend to **base** their lives and decisions upon reason or logic, which comes from the mind, rather than by faith in God, which comes from the Spirit.

A third concern is that the word faith is being misapplied in many cases, as people tend to think that it means only belief with the heart or giving mental ascent to a truth. However, that is only the beginning point and by itself never produces anything, as it remains in the spirit by itself. Faith without works is dead.

I'm also a little concerned with what I call the "faith movement" in America. It appears that some individuals involved in the movement might be promoting faith in faith, whereas Christianity is based on faith in God and His Word. A popular secular offshoot of this movement is the "you can have what you say" movement, which has been promoted by a book and movie of the same name, "The Secret"

## - What about Tongues <sup>6</sup> -

The gift of tongues is the ability to speak in unlearned languages, which may be either heavenly or earthly in their origin. This is a unique gift and should be sought for by every believer. Why? Because it is the one spiritual gift that always edifies (builds up) the **user**<sup>7</sup> and when interpreted... edifies (builds up) others.<sup>8</sup>

Many times within the Christian community believers don't build one another up in faith, hope and love. The remedy for this is using the gift of tongues. Did you ever wonder why the apostle Paul said, "*I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all*"? (1 Corinthians 14:18) Paul continually spoke in tongues so he could be built up in his faith, hope, love, etc. Since he was on the mission field evangelizing, starting churches, teaching and equipping new believers, there was no one else to build him up.

## - What Is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit <sup>9</sup> And Is It Evidenced By Speaking In Tongues -

The terms, "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" or "baptized with or in the Holy Spirit" are just ways of saying that a person has received an **initial** supernatural empowerment by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus alluded to two baptisms or immersions when he spoke with Nicodemus, one of the leaders of Israel. He said, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the*

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<sup>6</sup> See Appendix A - An Open Group Discussion on Tongues

<sup>7</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:4

<sup>8</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:5

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix B - The Story of Elijah and Elisha - A Picture of Baptism

*Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'* (John 3:5-7) Then, after He was raised from the dead, Jesus told his disciples to expect another baptism. He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, *"Which, 'He said,' you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."* (Acts 1:4-5) The duality of baptism became evident on the day of Pentecost, fifty days after Jesus' resurrection from the dead. From that time on those who believed the gospel were immersed in water by other **Christians** and immersed in the Holy Spirit sent by **Jesus** from heaven.

Upon receiving the Holy Spirit believers were supernaturally empowered to do the work of the ministry. Did it mean that all spoke in tongues? No. The apostle Paul through the use of a rhetorical question in 1 Corinthians 12:30, explains that all do not speak in tongues.

However, the book of Acts clearly indicates that with the coming of the Holy Spirit upon believers that various manifestations of the Spirit were evidenced. Many of these manifestations were utterances, either tongues or prophecy because others "heard" something. This also supports what Jesus told Nicodemus<sup>10</sup> concerning the Holy Spirit and being "born again". *"The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."*

One aspect of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is that it occurs internally as the person is **filled** with the Holy Spirit or as some refer to it as being "Spirit filled". *And when He had said this, He **breathed** (breath – internal – filled) on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained."* (John 20:22-23)

A second aspect of the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs externally as the person is **clothed** with the Holy Spirit. *And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are **clothed** (immersed in, overwhelmed or covered) **with power from on high.**"* (Luke 24:49)

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<sup>10</sup> John 3:3-8

# *Operating in Your Gifting*

## **- What hinders Christians as a whole From embracing and using spiritual gifts -**

1. Christians have not been **trained** to use them.
2. There is a **lack of obedience** to Jesus Christ and the Word of God. Sometimes we call Jesus, “Lord” but do not do what He says.
3. Ministering in signs and wonders sounds **presumptuous**. Some get the idea that they are demanding God to “do” what they want. The proper way to think about it is: that God has asked us to “do” something and willingly helps us accomplish the task.
4. There is a sense of **powerlessness**. Yet as Christians we have equal access to the same power source Jesus had: the Holy Spirit. We are able to do the same works as our Lord and even greater works<sup>11</sup> because Jesus has gone to the Father and said we would be able to.
5. Some argue, “Yes, but Jesus was God.” That is correct, however according to Scripture, Jesus *emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. (Philippians 2:7)* Jesus having laid aside His omnipotence worked no miracles until after His baptism, when the Holy Spirit came upon Him. Then, *Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. (Luke 4:14)*
6. The **worldview** of many Christians, especially those in “western” nations, is flawed. Society has been shaping their worldview since childhood. While they believe God is supernatural, they are raised to deny the supernatural. **Reason** has become the god of our society with materialism dominating its goals.

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<sup>11</sup> John 14:12

## - Living in Two Worlds -

The **Natural** World -

The Kingdoms of this world

Seen.

Its laws are governed by **Reason**.  
*(The ability of the mind to make a decision based on observable data.)*

Requires being born.

Requires thinking.

Relies on the use of the five senses.

Naturally discerned.

Forms an opinion.

Reason is subject to doubt.

All people have reason.

Reason isn't necessarily pleasing to God. (Ro 1:17-32)

The **Supernatural** World -

The Kingdom of God

Unseen.

Its laws are governed by **Faith**.  
*(The ability of the spirit to hear and respond to a word from God.)*

Requires being "born again".

Requires obedience.

Relies on hearing God's voice.

Spiritually discerned.

Trusts God's word.

Faith is the assurance.

Not all people have faith. (2Th 3:2)

Without faith it is impossible to please God. (He 11:6)

## - Is It Reasonable -

- to build an ark when it has never rained?
- to sacrifice your son while expecting to have descendents through him?
- to stretch a staff over the sea to part the waters for your people to walk through it?
- to obtain victory over the enemy by walking around his city and blowing horns?
- to wash in a certain river to be healed of leprosy?
- to put mud in a man's eyes expecting him to see?
- to walk on water across a lake instead of taking a boat or walking around it?
- to sing praises to God while imprisoned after being tortured?
- to pray to an unseen God trusting that he hears you?
- to lay hands on someone expecting them to get well?
- to tell people about the future before it happens?
- to change water into wine?

How did these unreasonable things come to pass? \_\_\_\_\_  
Yet Jesus used reason to help us understand how we can apply faith.

- Is it reasonable... to ask, expecting to receive?
- Is it reasonable... to seek, expecting to find?
- Is it reasonable... to knock, expecting the door to be opened.
- Jesus said... *“Ask and you shall receive.”* Do you believe it? Do you have faith?
- Jesus said... *“Seek and you shall find.”* Do you believe it? Do you have faith?
- Jesus said... *“Knock and it shall be opened.”* Do you believe it? Do you have faith?
- **Jesus also said...** *“When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”* Do you have faith?

## **- The Operation of Faith Brings God’s Word to Pass In the Earth -**

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.  
(Hebrews 11:1)*

### **Faith has an object**

Jesus said, *“Have faith in God!”* True faith then has as its object, God, Himself. God has chosen to reveal himself to men through His words, and more specifically, Jesus Christ, Our Lord, the Living Word of God. The ancients gained approval from God and did mighty works, because they heard His voice and obeyed His words. ***So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.***

### **The Word of God is revealed to believers in three different forms**

1. The written word of God – The Scriptures.
2. Utterances – Testimony, preaching, teaching, tongues and prophecy.
3. A still small voice – Hearing in your spirit.

### **Faith has three parts**

1. **Believing** the word of God.
2. **Confession** of the belief.
3. **Acting** upon the belief.

### **There are three parts to faith because man is a three-part being.**

1. Spirit.
2. Soul.
3. Body.



## Examples of the pattern of faith

1. Noah heard the Word of God and believed it. (*Make for yourself an ark.*)
  2. Noah spoke. (He told His family because they helped him build the ark.)
  3. Noah did what he was told to do. (Noah entered the ark he built.)
- 
1. Abraham heard the Word of God and believed it. (*Move to the land, which I will show you.*)
  2. Abraham spoke. (He told his family because they moved with him.)
  3. Abraham did what he was told to do. (Abraham physically moved.)
- 
1. You heard the Word of God concerning Jesus and your salvation and you believed it.
  2. You spoke, confessing that Jesus is Lord.
  3. You got baptized.

**FAITH IS NOT COMPLETE UNTIL ALL THREE PARTS OCCUR!**

## Hindrances to Faith

- **Doubt** – which is suspended unbelief. *Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ and does not **doubt** in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him. Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you.*
- **Fear** – which is idolatry. It is the result of placing something above God. Many times it involves the issue of pride ... how will I look, what will people think ... what if I fail, etc. Three hundred and sixty-five times throughout the Scriptures God tells His people to *Fear not*. That’s enough to remind us every day of the year. Remember, *There is **no fear** in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.*
- **Wrong motives** – which is the desire of the flesh. *You ask and do not receive, because you ask with **wrong motives**, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

## **- How Do the Manifestations of the Holy Spirit Happen -**

The manifestations can occur at various times and different settings but always follow the pattern of faith that we have been discussing. When they occur within a congregational setting certain protocols need to be followed and are outlined by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians, chapters 12-14.

1. The word from God comes and is believed.
  - Word of wisdom
  - Word of knowledge
  - Discerning of spirits
  
2. The word of God is uttered.
  - Prophecy
  - A Tongue
  - Interpretation of a Tongue
  
3. The word of God is acted upon.
  - Healing
  - Miracles
  - Faith

## **- Has the Holy Spirit Come Upon You with Power -**

This is a fair question to ask **believers**. According to Scripture the promise of the imbuement with power (baptism with the Holy Spirit by Jesus or endowing with spiritual gifts) is for **believers**. And when the event occurred supernatural signs and wonders **always** accompanied it. However in the book of Acts we see that it came to pass in a variety ways and different times for **believers**. For example:

- It was never given to non-believers.
- It was not given to those who had not heard about the Holy Spirit. (Men of Ephesus)
- It may not have been given to Simon, the Magician even though he was a believer and baptized. He wanted to buy the right to dispense the power of the Holy Spirit. Wrong motive!
- Sometimes it was before water baptism.
- Sometimes it was after water baptism.
- Jesus directly poured out the gift on some.
- Most received the gift in conjunction with the laying on of hands, either by the apostles or elders.

## - Spiritual Terms -

**Praying** in the Spirit – is praying in a tongue (language) that has not been learned. Christians can also pray with understanding: that is in a tongue (language) they have learned (e.g. English). (1 Corinthians 14:15)

**Singing** in the Spirit - is singing in a tongue (language) that has not been learned. Christians can also sing with understanding: that is in a tongue (language) they have learned (e.g. English). (1 Corinthians 14:15)

**Walking** in the Spirit – living your life in submission to the leading of the Holy Spirit, which is pleasing to God. (Romans 8:4)

**Gifts** of the Spirit – are supernatural empowerments given by the Holy Spirit to do the work of the ministry.

**Grieving** the Spirit – is doing things that are contrary to the will of God. (Psalms 78:40 and Ephesians 4:29-32)

**Quenching** the Spirit – is limiting what God wants to do at any given moment by giving preference to what any one individual wants to do. (1 Thessalonians 5:19)

**Leading** of the Spirit – is the urging or prompting of the Holy Spirit to either say or do something. (1 Corinthians 14:26)

**Anointing** of the Spirit – is the strong presence of God upon someone. (1 Kings 8:1-11 and Luke 5:17)

**Fruit** of the Spirit - is the Godly character produced in an individual's life through his submission to the Holy Spirit's leading and guiding. (Galatians 5:22-23)

## - Preparing To Be Used By God -

Before I begin this section I want to unequivocally state **1)** that no man can come to the Father unless the Holy Spirit draws him and **2)** that the promise of the Holy Spirit is given to all those who repent, believe the gospel and are baptized in Jesus' name. However, many times Christians are not prepared to be used by the Holy Spirit, because they do not fully comprehend the concept, that they are the **temples** of the living God. It is Christ, the anointed who dwells within them. Imagine that! God, the **Holy** one, Creator of heaven and earth, the One who is worthy of all honor and praise has come to take up residence inside of them.

When we consider the Old Testament temple, its furnishings, the priesthood and the daily ritual surrounding it we gain insight on what it means to be in the presence of a Holy God. It is not within the scope of this book to give you an in-depth knowledge of such things but it is useful to give you guidelines in preparation for being used by God.

**Desire** - it all begins here. Do you want to be used by God?

**Availability** – Have you put your “to do” list in second place thereby demonstrating that you are willing to have your life interrupted by God?

**Reflection** – Is God living in a Holy Place?

**Getting clean** – before the priest served God he was required to wash at the laver.

- Forgive those who have sinned against you. *For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. (Matthew 6:14-15)*
- Confess your sins. *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)*

**Come into His presence** – Give thanks to Jesus for forgiving your sins and praise Him for cleansing you from all unrighteousness.

- *Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name. (Psalm 100:4)*

**Commune with Him** – recognize that you are in His presence and are free to enjoy fellowship with Him in a variety of ways:

- Break bread with Him – Recognizing that you are part of Christ’s body.
- Drink with Him – Celebrating the joy of the new covenant in Christ’s blood.
- Talk with Him – Prayer or any other conversations you would like to have.
- Work with Him – Using the gifts of the Holy Spirit, or
- Rest with Him – Just enjoying the pleasure of His company.

**Christians are like power cords -**

- By themselves they are pretty much useless.  
*I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for **apart from Me** you can do nothing. (John 15:5)*
- However, once they are plugged into the power source they are capable of carrying the power to do all kinds of wonderful things.  
*Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and **greater works** than these he will do; because I go to the Father. (John 14:12)*
- Plugged-in Christians can be a channel for any thought or word or deed God wants to do.
- And as long as the connection with God is not broken then He can use them. **Sin** breaks the connection.

### Working with God -

- Working with God normally begins with a discussion about the job and what is needed to get it done. We call this prayer or petition.
- Why do we pray? Essentially we want to **hear** what God has to say or we want Him to **do** something: either for others or ourselves.
- Sometimes we can't even have an intelligent conversation with God because we don't even know what to ask for. So we should pray in the Spirit. In other words we are praying God's will not our own.

*In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:26-27)*

- **Listen - wait** for God's answer. This is not normally a prolonged wait. The way the word is used in Scripture indicates an "active" waiting as if we can expect the reply momentarily.

*Yet those who **wait** for the LORD will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary. (Isaiah 40:31)*

- **Speak** – what God says.

*So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. (Isaiah 55:11)*

- **Act** – on what God says to do.

*Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. (James 2:17)*

### A Prayer of Faith - This is a good prayer outline for groups of Christians.

- **Ask** – Come Lord Jesus and join with us in our midst. Fill us with your Spirit.
- **Seek** – We are looking for your wisdom and direction that we may behave like children of God in this situation.
- **Knock** – Give us an opportunity to use the things, which you have given us, so that our Father in heaven is glorified.

## - Cautions about Spiritual Gifts -

1. Do not confuse spiritual gifts with **natural** abilities.
2. Do not confuse spiritual gifts with the **fruit** of the Spirit.
  - Fruit indicates **maturity**.
  - Gifts indicate **ministry**.
3. Do not confuse spiritual gifts with Christian **roles**. (Worship leader, usher or janitor)
4. Be aware of the “**gift protection**” tendency, which is expecting others to serve in the same way you do.
5. Do not feel your gift makes you **superior** to others.
6. Realize that using a spiritual gift without **love** is worthless. It is wise to recall that the chapter on “love”, 1 Corinthians 13, lies in between the two great chapters concerning spiritual gifts.
7. Recognize that you have both a **primary** and a **secondary** ministry in the Church.
  - Your primary ministry commitment should be in the area of your **giftedness**.
  - Your secondary ministry includes serving in any other area of the Church where you are **needed**.
8. We are not to seek after manifestations but to **concentrate** on our motivational gift and the most **effective** ministry of expressing it.

# ***THE GIFTS***

Now there are varieties of **gifts**, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of **ministries**, and the same Lord. There are varieties of **effects**, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to **each one** is given the **manifestation** of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

**Motivations** (effects) – the Father gives every Christian a primary desire (heart, driving force or motive) to serve within the Body of Christ. These motive gifts are listed in Romans 12:3-9 and consist of the following:

1. Prophesying
2. Serving
3. Teaching
4. Exhorting
5. Contributing
6. Governing
7. Mercy

**Ministries** – the Lord Jesus Christ provides every Christian with a primary channel (outlet or ministry) for serving within the Body of Christ. These ministry gifts are listed in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11-13 and consist of the following:

1. Apostle
2. Prophet
3. Evangelist
4. Pastor
5. Teacher
6. Helper
7. Administrator

**Manifestations** (gifts) – The Holy Spirit works through every Christian in different ways to reveal God's power and glory: to attract non-believers, to edify the Body of Christ and to accomplish His purposes. These manifestation gifts are listed in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 and consist of the following:

1. **Revelation** gifts:
  - Word of knowledge
  - Word of wisdom
  - Discerning of spirits
2. **Utterance** gifts:
  - Prophecy
  - Various kinds of tongues
  - Interpretation of tongues
3. **Power** gifts:
  - Gifts of healing
  - Working of miracles
  - Faith

## - Motivational Gifts - Romans 12:3-9 -

**Prophesying** – the motivation to tell others what God is declaring (the truth). Individuals who are motivated by prophesying tend to have the following characteristics:

- Views life as black and white – no shades of gray.
- Verbal.
- Honest, frank or even blunt.
- Faces conflicts head-on and cannot stand to see conflicts unresolved.
- Has the ability to stand-alone even when all others reject him.
- Very sensitive and emotional.
- Very intuitive. Usually has the gift of discerning of spirits; can see right through someone. Understands the motives and psychological reasoning behind people's actions.
- Is willing to tell his faults and weaknesses in order to motivate repentance and honesty in others.
- Exposes sin boldly.

**Serving** – the motivation to bless others in practical, material ways. Individuals who are motivated by serving tend to have the following characteristics:

- Likes being told what to do to insure that they are doing the most needed job.
- Enjoys working with their hands.
- Excellent in demonstrating hospitality.
- Has the ability to detect practical needs and meet needs others may not notice.
- Therefore, they must guard against being resentful of others who are oblivious to those needs.
- Able to recall specific likes and dislikes of those they are serving.
- Be frustrated by “red tape” that hinders them from meeting a need. They often use their own money to avoid delays.
- Has difficulty being served by others.
- Find it hard to say “no” to people who need them.
- Works best behind the scenes,
- But are easily hurt or rejected when their work goes unnoticed because their work is actually an extension of their very identity.

**Teaching** – the motivation to instruct others in applying truths that will benefit them. Individuals who are motivated by teaching tend to have the following characteristics:

- Logical, intellectual and factual.
- Very stable, unemotional personalities.
- Are not moved by emotions but by facts.
- See the Bible as the basis for everything.
- Frustrated by teachings that are not proven out by exact Scripture.
- Appear to challenge or test knowledge of others, which may offend ... when they actually, simply want the facts.



- More objective than subjective.
- Solves problems by beginning with a Scriptural principle.
- Love to study, analyze and probe. May even enjoy studying more than presenting the material.
- May develop pride in their intellectual ability or become legalistic and dogmatic, intolerant of other views.
- Accurate and orderly in their approach to life.
- Hard workers, dependable, mature and highly motivated, often to the point of being a perfectionist.

**Exhorting** – the motivation to encourage others to live a victorious life. Individuals who are motivated by exhorting tend to have the following characteristics:

- Cheerful and positive.
- Loves to offer practical steps of action.
- Prefers to apply and present truth than research it.
- Look on the bright side.
- Always find something good to say about someone.
- Enthusiastic and easy to be around.
- Often drawn into personal counseling situations.
- Views trials as God’s classroom for spiritual growth.
- Interrupts others to give advice or opinion.
- May become overly self-confident and opinionated.
- Positive mental attitude.
- Encourages others, ignoring their own problems even if they are down in the dumps.
- Needs to be careful not to encourage someone who really may need correction.

**Contributing** – the motivation to give time, talent, energy and means to benefit others and advance the gospel. Individuals who are motivated by contributing tend to have the following characteristics:

- Has the gift of generosity.
- Has ability to make money and acquire assets. People who are always in debt do not have this gift.
- Takes delight when a gift is an answer to prayer.
- May attempt to control money by attaching strings.
- May pressure others into giving.
- Often gives anonymously, not wanting to be noticed by others.
- May save large sums in anticipation of someone’s later need and at the right time give it.
- May even be willing to live below his means to have more money to give away and invest for good uses.
- Senses needs that others might overlook and meets them financially.

**Governing** – the motivation to organize, lead or direct others. Individuals who are motivated by governing tend to have the following characteristics:

- Sees the big picture.
- Delegate and organize people into jobs and roles that are good for them.
- If given the authority, will oversee a job and do it in entirety, even doing extra work with pleasure.
- Does not need credit for his work. Gives a thorough job description and keeps things on schedule.
- Once a project is over, must quickly move on to a new challenge.
- Must not become so task-oriented that he ignores people's feelings.
- If he is not given authority to lead, he will stay quietly in the background.
- Needs to open up and share areas of his heart and not only discuss business.

**Mercy** – the motivation to show love, compassion and care for those in need. Individuals who are motivated by mercy tend to have the following characteristics:

- Tremendous capacity to show love to others.
- Always looks for the good in people.
- Easily detects insincerity or wrong motives.
- Dislikes being rushed in a job or activity.
- Generally indecisive.
- Good at one on one ministry and relieving pain.
- Many creative people are merciful.
- Reacts strongly against pride and arrogance.
- Affectionate nature is often misinterpreted by the opposite sex.
- Sensitive and is drawn to hurting, helpless people. Goes for the underdog.
- Avoids conflict.
- May be led by emotions.

## **- Ministry Gifts - 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11-13 -**

**Apostle** – One sent out to establish (plant) and strengthen churches.

**Prophet** – One who speaks forth the message from God, which provides vision and direction to the church.

**Evangelist** – One who preaches the gospel.

**Pastor** – One who feeds and protects the church.

**Teacher** – One who instructs the church on how to live.

**Helper** – One who helps the church accomplish its mission.

**Administrator** – One who runs the day-to-day operations of the church.

## - Manifestation Gifts - 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 -

### - The Revelation Gifts -

**Word of Knowledge** – is a revelation of information for a person, group or situation, which could not have been known by natural means. Words of knowledge indicate a **direction** in which God wants to work at that particular time. Following is some information on the exercise of this gift:

- The “knowledge” may come as a picture (dream or vision) or a word in the mind’s-eye or superimposed over a person’s face or affected part of their body.
- It can come by hearing words with the inner ear.
- This word is often accompanied by a word of wisdom. In other words, what is to be done with this knowledge?
- When God reveals something this way, it is because He wants something done with the knowledge.

**Word of Wisdom** – is a revelation of wisdom beyond natural wisdom that enables a person to know what to do or say. Words of wisdom reflect **how** God wants to work in a particular circumstance. Following is some information on the exercise of this gift:

- The “wisdom” can come in a variety of ways such as “mind’s-eye picture”, words or hearing with the “inner ear”.
- It is sometime accompanied by a word of knowledge. Is there some insight that is needed?
- Sometimes it is given as a prophetic utterance and has all the characteristics of prophesy.
- In the context of a healing ministry the gift is usually exercised with others present.
- It almost always comes in exchange of what is currently happening.
- Its use makes it clear how to minister, pray, speak or otherwise act.

**Discerning of Spirits** – a supernatural ability to perceive what type of spirit is in operation in a given situation. Discerning of spirits reveals the **source** of particular manifestations. Following is some information on the exercise of this gift:

- As stated previously, this gift is one of the safeguards for use of spiritual gifts.
- The gift of discerning of spirits is **not** the gift of suspicion.
- Discerning of spirits is extremely useful in deliverance ministries and for exposing error in believers.
- Those who use this gift generally have their eyes open and observing.
- The discernment of the Holy Spirit might be confirmed by one of the following:
  - See the signs of the anointing discussed previously.
  - A light above an individual, like a tongue of fire.
  - A halo around the head.
  - An aura outlining the whole body.

- Discernment of a demonized person might be confirmed by one of the following:
  - A telltale word superimposed over a face may be seen.
  - A second face (like an old wizened one) may intermittently appear superimposed over a younger one.
  - Shadows or darkened passages on a face reveal the presence of afflicting spirits.
  - Shapes superimposed over parts of the anatomy, such as a sinister creature.
- If a demonic spirit is involved, a confirmation should be obtained. Share with others in a “kind” way what you have seen or believe. The confirmation can come from other Christians or the individual himself. Deal with the spirit or get more qualified help.

## - The Utterance Gifts -

**Prophecy** – is an anointed proclamation of God through an individual to encourage, exhort, and or comfort.

- Of all the spiritual gifts that a believer should desire and seek for, the apostle Paul believed that prophecy was foremost among them because it has the ability to edify, exhort and console. (1Corinthians 14:1-3)
- There are two aspects of this gift: forth telling and foretelling. Forth telling deals with a declaration of truth from God. Foretelling deals with speaking about future events. Foretelling also serves as a sign that it is God speaking since only He knows the future.
- An individual does not have to hold the office of a prophet in order to prophesy. However, those who serve in the ministry of a prophet must meet three tests:
  - In whose name does the prophet come? *“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”* (Revelation 19:10)
  - Does the prophet’s sign come to pass? (Deuteronomy 13:1-5)
  - What type of spiritual fruit does the prophet produce? (Matthew 7:15-20)
- Prophecy is **not** the equivalent of **Scripture**. Prophecy is a **particular** word for a **particular** individual or congregation at a **particular** time through a **particular** person. Scripture is for **all** Christians in **all** places at **all** times.
- As with the exercise of all the gifts the “**way of love**” should be the motive for its use.
- Prophecies should be restricted to two or three at any one time.
- The supernatural revelation behind the message may come to the one prophesying through meditating on Scripture, visions, dreams, trances, impressions (e.g. a word picture), an audible voice or even an angelic visitation.
- The words or visions for a prophecy are most likely to come in an atmosphere of prayer and adoration.
- The prophecy may be uttered loudly or quietly, in song, poetry, prose or mime.
- An individual might sense the anointing for the utterance of prophecy – a witness in one’s own heart. There may be physical sensations in the mouth area such as dryness, swelling or tingling.

- A person receiving an anointing for prophecy is not bound to utter it instantaneously. The prophecy may be appropriate for use on a later occasion. There should be no fear of forgetfulness as God has bound it to the heart of the individual until it is given.
- The one prophesying is in control.
- The one prophesying may be given only two or three words or a sentence upon which he is to act in faith that God will supply the rest of the message. Often he will not **know** how it will continue or end. It is kind of like uncorking a bottle ... once the stopper is removed it just flows until it is empty.
- One may also sense a burden or see a picture about which he begins to speak.
- Don't be surprised if the prophecy is short. Remember Haggai 1:13, *I am with you, declares the LORD.*
- Don't continue on in the flesh. Once the anointing lifts just stop. That is God's way of telling you when to stop.
- There is usually a great sense of ecstasy (especially initially) in the exercise of the gift. But this is not necessarily true for those who have exercised the gift many times.
- Allow variety in the introduction of the message. People may say, "I believe God is saying", "thus saith the Lord", "I am the Lord" or "God wants you to know", etc."
- Biblical language or quotations are common. The book of Revelation is an extremely long prophecy and contains over 400 citations from the Old Testament.
- People who are used to reading and studying from a King James Version of the Bible may speak in that style.
- When prophecy is given to an individual it usually serves as a confirmation to what God is already speaking to the individual about.

**Tongues** – languages given to a believer by the Holy Spirit, but not learned or understood by the speaker.

- Tongues may be used in one of three ways:
  - Privately – in which case it does not need to be interpreted.
    - The gift is unique in that it has the ability to edify the speaker himself as we have discussed previously.
    - It is used in intercessory prayer because the Spirit prays God's will rather than a prayer emanating from the mind, which can be cluttered with our own thoughts and will.
    - It is easy to pray in tongues because you don't run out of thoughts and words about what to pray for or for how long you should pray.
    - It is used in spiritual warfare, personal conflict, deliverance or exorcism.
  - In public – the language should be recognizable by the hearers without interpretation as was the case on the day of Pentecost.
  - Within the congregation – tongues need to be interpreted in order to edify the believers. When interpreted it is equivalent to prophecy.

- Tongues are for a sign to non-believers that God is indwelling the speaker.
- Historically, the act of speaking in tongues was evidence that God was in direct control. There are several major Biblical examples of God using tongues to indicate His involvement:
  - At the tower of Babel, God caused everyone to speak in tongues.
  - When God spoke the Ten Commandments out loud at Mount Sinai, He did so in the languages of the seventy original tribes. (Jewish commentary on the Scriptures)
  - Each year on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies and spoke with God before the Mercy Seat. This was always done in tongues. (Jewish commentary on the Scriptures)
  - At the initiation of the Church on the day of Pentecost, the believers spoke in tongues.
  - Paul spoke with tongues more than anyone.
  - Throughout the book of Acts it indicates that new believers spoke in tongues and prophesied as part of their “born again” experience. It served as a sign that God had placed the seal of the Holy Spirit within these people.
- It is not unusual for a tongue-speaker to have several languages, none of which he has learned.
- The use of tongues **privately** is permanent and can be done at will. **Public** use of tongues is temporary and requires the anointing of the Holy Spirit.
- The gift of tongues may be exercised publicly in song. This may be a corporate offering of praise: *Singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord*. Or this may be an individual communicating a message from God: *Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. (Ephesians 5:19)*
- The gift may also be used privately in song.
- It should be noted that many people have received tongues when singing praise to God.
- Silence should follow a public tongue, with the congregation praying for the interpretation to come forth. The interpretation can be from one who has the gift of interpretation of tongues or one who understands the language and can tell the congregation the interpretation. If no interpretation is forthcoming public use of tongues should cease.

**Interpretation of Tongues** – a supernatural ability to express the content of what has been spoken in tongues.

- As with prophecy, the gift of interpretation may come with just a few words at first. The rest will follow when we speak out in faith.
- The interpretation might also be given in its entirety.
- The interpreter can receive the interpretation in words, symbols, pictures or inspired thought.
- Sometime the person giving the interpretation may hear the message of the person speaking in tongues as though the person were directly speaking to him in a language with which he is familiar.

- When a message is given in song the interpretation may be in song as well, though it needn't be.
- The interpretation may vary in length from the original or it may be given in pictorial, parabolic, descriptive or literal language as the Holy Spirit wills.
- Only one person should interpret a tongue.
- There should not be more than three tongues and three interpretations at any given meeting

## - The Power Gifts -

**Healings** – different ways and variety of degrees in which God manifests healing.

- The purpose of healing is to contribute towards the process of wholeness within an individual.
- Since man is a three-part being (spirit, soul and body), healing may occur in any of those three parts.
- The soul, consisting of the mind, will and emotions may be healed in any of these specific areas as well.
- Sickness and death are clearly the domains of Satan so anyone involved in this ministry may find himself involved in spiritual warfare. Spiritual attacks may occur before, during or after healing ministry. *Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)*
  - Before ministry:
    - Sudden depression.
    - Disinterested feeling or tiredness.
    - Anger and frustration.
    - Strife or tension with those close by.
    - Sense of unworthiness.
  - During ministry:
    - Distractions.
    - Doubts, confused and unedifying thoughts.
    - Feelings of lack of faith or anointing.
    - Temptations to stop listening to God and take over in the flesh.
    - Tendency to focus on the condition.
    - Discouraging, negative thoughts.
    - Desire to speed up the process.
  - After ministry:
    - Sudden depression.
    - Sense of failure.
    - Temptation to pride.
- Remember that Jesus commissioned us to heal, especially in preaching the kingdom.
- Check to make sure the armor of God is in place.
- Allow time for ministry. Don't try to rush it.
- If possible help the person who is being ministered to relax and try to keep him from embarrassment.

- Invite the Holy Spirit to work alongside you in doing the work of the ministry.
- Ask God what he wants you to do.
- Wait for an inspiration – a flood of thoughts describing the situation, vision, picture, impression, Scripture or word.
- The power can come through as:
  - An anointing – **1)** a sense of power flowing out, **2)** heat, **3)** heaviness, trembling or shaking of hands, **4)** a tingling feeling or goose bumps, **5)** feeling of compassion or a full assurance that it will be done.
  - A detachment – standing back and sensing something is being done through you.
  - Words of knowledge, wisdom or faith.
  - A vision or picture in the mind’s eye that the healing is taking place.
- **Faith** must be present. Even Jesus had trouble healing when faith was not present. He could not do many mighty works in Nazareth due to unbelief and had put out unbelieving mourners from a dead girl’s room before He could raise her from the dead.
- Sometimes you may command the person being ministered to. This response to a command can be an act of faith. Stretch out your hand! Pick up your mat! Go wash yourself!
- **Unforgiveness** can be a major hindrance if it is in those ministering or ministered to.
- The person being ministered to might experience:
  - Heat if being healed ... cold if being delivered.
  - Hot flashes in certain parts of the body.
  - Ripples on or under the skin.
  - Radiance of face, flickering eyelids, trembling/shaking, lightheadedness, weariness, peace, deep breathing, tenderness, tears, brokenness, sobbing, groaning, laughter, joy or falling down (“slain in the Spirit”).
- Usually the more you minister the more success you have. Faith is like a muscle and you can build it. Some develop a specific area of healing (deliverance, emotional, eyes, ears, etc).
- Even though you may sense nothing, healing can occur on the basis of authority and obedience to Scripture.

**Miracles** – demonstrations of power and action by God that goes beyond natural laws.

- A miracle is a supernatural act: a **temporary suspension** of the accustomed order of things.
- Some miracles that Jesus performed were walking on water, changing water to wine and feeding the multitudes with very little food.
- This gift is most evidenced by missionaries in pioneering the gospel.
- The gift seems to arise from deep compassion or anger.
- There is an immediate response in faith to something God has revealed to the individual. (Moses parting the sea, striking the rock, etc)



- The miracle worker then says the word or performs the act (or does both), which brings the miracle to pass.

**Faith** – wonder-working faith that moves mountains and waits expectantly for results.

- This gift arises from a supernatural surge of confidence, which an individual receives when faced with a specific situation or need, and has the assurance that God is going to act through a word or deed.
- It has a broad range of use covering creation or destruction, blessing or cursing, removal or alteration.
- Several Old Testament examples of this gift are found in Hebrews 11.
- In the New Testament we see Jesus cursing a fig tree and raising the dead, Peter's involvement in Ananias and Sapphira dropping dead, and Paul turning a Christian man's body over to Satan for torment.
- You might say this gift is kind of the "catch all" gift. Whatever manifestations don't fall under another category can be listed here.

### - Uncategorized Gifts -

**Celibacy** – the supernatural ability to remain single, enjoy it and not suffer undue sexual temptation. It is referenced in 1 Corinthians 7:7-9. Following is some information on the exercise of this gift:

- This gift may be permanent or temporary
- Many individuals who have committed their lives to serve Jesus Christ have been given this gift: monks, nuns, priests, missionaries, etc.
- This gift gives the individual a unique opportunity to serve God without being hindered by the cares and responsibilities of domestic life.
- It allows people to live on more modest means and to be able to go various places without the hindrance of family.
- Unfortunately the Catholic Church began making celibacy a requirement for the priesthood, which it was never intended to be.

**Martyrdom** – the supernatural ability to suffer and die for the Lord Jesus Christ. It is referenced in 1 Corinthians 13:3. Following is some information on the exercise of this gift:

- This gift has been widespread throughout the history of the Church.
- Usually it is a one-time use gift and should be sought by Christians in imminent peril.
- Anyone studying about martyrs can see this gift in action by the unique way people died and the testimonies they gave.
- A tremendous Biblical account of this gift is the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7.

## *Rules for Orderly Conduct*

Rule 1 – Miraculous signs and wonders may occur, but you are to pay attention only to those individuals who are able to confess Jesus as Lord. (1 Corinthians 12:1-3)

Rule 2 – Christians are to use their spiritual gifts for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

Rule 3 – God gives spiritual gifts to Christians according to His will. (1 Corinthians 12:8-11)

Rule 4 – God places Christians with their giftings in the body of Christ as He wills.

*A man's gift makes room for him and brings him before great men. (Proverbs 18:16)*

- Therefore, Christians should not think less of themselves because their gifting is different than another's.
- Nor should Christians think others are less important than themselves because their gifts differ.
- And spiritual gifts should not divide Christians, as they should be caring for one another. (1 Corinthians 12:12-26)

Rule 5 – Earnestly desire the greater gifts, those that can do more to help others. (1 Corinthians 12:27-31)

Rule 6 – Let love be your motive in using spiritual gifts. Love will profit you! Remember, spiritual gifts are good but they are only temporary. Faith hope and love will last forever. (1 Corinthians 13)

Rule 7 – Earnestly desire spiritual gifts, especially prophecy. It is good for edification exhortation and consolation of others. (1 Corinthians 14:1-4)

Rule 8 – Seek to speak in tongues. It will edify you. (1 Corinthians 14:4-5)

Rule 9 – Remember, speaking in another tongue never edifies anyone else unless it is interpreted. (1 Corinthians 14:6-11)

Rule 10 – Seek to edify the church, not just yourself. (1 Corinthians 14:12)

Rule 11 – If you speak in tongues pray that you may interpret. (1 Corinthians 14:13)

Rule 12 – Pray and sing with both tongues and your own language, in that way both the spirit and the mind are edified and become fruitful. (1 Corinthians 14:14-19)

Rule 13 – Be mature in your thinking, public speaking in tongues is a sign to unbelievers and public prophecy is a sign for believers. (1 Corinthians 14:20-25)

Rule 14 – Don't go empty-handed to an assembly; take a gift from God, which can be shared with others. (1 Corinthians 14:26)

Rule 15 – Don't allow more than three people to speak in tongues at an assembly and then only if there is an interpreter present. (1 Corinthians 14:27-28)

Rule 16 – Let up to three prophets speak at an assembly. (1 Corinthians 14:29)

Rule 17 – If one, who is not a prophet, receives a revelation let him speak before the prophet. (1 Corinthians 14:30)

Rule 18 – Any number of individuals, who are not prophets, may prophesy at an assembly. (1 Corinthians 14:31)

Rule 19 – All prophecy is to be judged by the prophets. (1 Corinthians 14:32-33)

Rule 20 – Desire to prophesy. (1 Corinthians 14:39)

Rule 21 – Do not forbid speaking in tongues. (1 Corinthians 14:39)

Rule 22 – *“But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner.”*  
(1 Corinthians 14:40)

### **- Scripture References Concerning Spiritual Gifts -**

Psalms 68:18

Romans 11:29 and 12:6-8

1 Corinthians 1:4-7 and 12:1-14:40

2 Corinthians 9:15

Ephesians 4:11-13

1 Timothy 4:12-14

2 Timothy 1:6-7

James 1:17

1 Peter 4:8-11

Revelation 19:10

## **- The Issue of Women Remaining Silent in the Churches -** **Footnote to 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 14:34-35 (Read the Scripture First)**

In these verses, the apostle Paul deals with the issue of disorderly conduct on the part of **some** women during the congregational meetings of the church. This passage of Scripture has caused some confusion within the Christian community, primarily because the historical context is not understood. Let's begin the discussion by establishing the background

1. Congregational meetings – Most modern “worship services” bear little resemblance to the early practice of Christians. Originally, congregational meetings were based on the order established in synagogues. Men and women were seated separately with a dividing wall (m’ chitzah) between them. It is still practiced this way in Orthodox congregations today.
2. Speaking – Paul was certainly not restricting a woman’s use of her spiritual gifting in a congregational setting. Acts 21:9 clearly states that there are women prophets. And Paul earlier in his epistle (11:5) refers to women praying and prophesying in a congregational setting.

In following synagogue practice, it was a man’s responsibility to **learn** and a woman’s to **hear**. To “learn” in Judaism is to study by discussing and thus to understand fully, because one’s questions got answered. To “hear” is to listen to the interchange but not participate in it. Therefore, the speaking being referred to here are women engaging in discussion **during** the “service”.

3. The women – According to what is written in the passages it is clear that Paul is referring primarily to married women who can “learn” or discuss the issues with their husbands at home.

God wants women to be educated! Many have the spiritual gift of teaching and serve in the capacity of a teacher. They are able to teach (disciple) children and other women. This requires that they “learn” or discuss issues. Their “learning” process could occur at any time other than the congregational meeting.

From the historical context it appears that the apostle Paul is: **1)** addressing married women **2)** who are asking and answering questions on various issues **3)** either among themselves or openly with the men **4)** in a congregational meeting.

**- The Issue of Primacy -**  
**Footnote to 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 14:36-38**  
(Read the Scripture First)

Paul reinforces the strength of his appeal to orderly conduct through his statements in verses 36–38. His appeal in these verses is to primacy or how things were **first** established.<sup>12</sup> For Paul, primacy is a key issue in establishing God’s divine order and authority.<sup>13</sup> For example, the primacy of man in relation to a woman can be seen in Scripture.

1. Who was created first? Adam, a man.
2. To whom did God first speak? Adam, a man.
3. With whom, was the first covenant made? Adam, a man.
4. Who was first to not taste death? Enoch, a man.
5. Who was the first to make provision for the salvation to the world? Noah, a man.
6. To whom were the promises given? Abraham, a man.
7. To whom was the Law given? Moses, a man.
8. Who was the first to serve as Judge over Israel? Moses, a man.
9. To whom was kingship over God’s people given? Saul, a man.
10. Who was the first to receive a heavenly throne? Jesus, a man.

Another example of primacy in Scripture is that of a mother in relation to her children. She has authority over them. This can be seen in the fifth commandment, “*Honor your father and your mother.*” Even Jesus submitted to His mother’s authority, by granting her the request of providing wine for the people at a wedding in Cana.

The final example I will use is one that Paul often defers to and is the basis of his appeal in these verses, “*To the Jew first.*” Listen to what verse 36 says, “*Was it from you (Gentiles) that the word of God first went forth? Or has it come to you (Gentiles) only?*” The point that the apostle Paul is making is that Gentiles were to submit to, preserve and follow the orderly conduct given the Jewish people by God.

Next, in verse 37, he challenges the prophets and spiritually minded people to see that what he is saying is from the Lord. In other words, “You ask the Lord yourself, see if I’m telling you the truth.” He seals the deal with the primacy of his apostolic authority, as the Apostle to the Gentiles in verse 38. “If you don’t recognize and adhere to the things I’m telling you then you will not be recognized by God or me either.”

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<sup>12</sup> Christian teachers use the concept of primacy in relation to the Scriptures. The first use of a word, a concept, a law, etc. is important in developing one’s understanding of its further use and the Scriptures as a whole. The Torah (Pentateuch, the Law or 1<sup>st</sup> five books of the Bible) is held in especially high regard by Jews, because it establishes God’s divine order.

<sup>13</sup> Many Christians refute the authority of Torah, saying they are no longer under the Law. However, it is more precise to say that Christians are no longer under the “Law of Moses”, which is contained within the Torah. For example, nothing in the book of Genesis relates to the “Law of Moses” since all of its events predated Moses.

## ***Tongues – A Group Discussion***

Since the gift of speaking in tongues seems to be the most controversial gift, I have prepared this special worksheet to assist you in thinking through the gift.

Look what the Bible says about the tongue.

*And the **tongue** is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the **tongue** is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. (James 3:6-10)*

- Can the tongue be controlled? And if so, how? **(Yes, but only by the Holy Spirit)**

Are the tongues spoken of in the Bible, only known languages? **(No)**

*If I speak with the **tongues** of **men** and of **angels** ... (1 Corinthians 13:1)*

- How many known languages are spoken on the earth today? **(7,000+)**
- How many dialects (sub groups) are there? **(This is unknown)**
  - For example, in Great Britain the English language has five major dialects: (Northern, southern, Scottish, Welsh and Irish)
  - China has over 250 languages. Out of the top ten languages spoken in China there are 985 dialects.
- How many heavenly languages or tongues of angels are there? **(Unknown)**
- How many languages do you speak? **(The usual answer is one)**
- How many languages can you identify when they are spoken? **(Maybe 4 or 5)**
- How then can you or anyone else judge or invalidate another when he is speaking, praying or singing in tongues unless it is interpreted? **(You can't)**

What the Bible says about speaking in tongues.

*For one who **speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God**; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries. (1 Corinthians 14:2)*

- Why would a man want to speak to God? **(Let each one give his own answer)**
- What advantage is there when praying in a tongue? **(When a person prays in a tongue he is by-passing his mind, which contains his own thoughts and directly prays the will of God, since it is the Holy Spirit praying through him.)**

*One who speaks in a tongue **edifies himself** ... (1 Corinthians 14:4)*

- Why would a man want to do that? **(Let each one give his own answer)**

*Now I wish you **all spoke in tongues** ...(1 Corinthians 14:5)*

- Why did Paul say that? **(Let each one give his own answer)**

*There are, perhaps, a great **many kinds of languages** in the world, and **no kind is without meaning**. (1 Corinthians 14:10)*

*For if I pray in a **tongue**, my **spirit prays**, but my mind is unfruitful.  
(1 Corinthians 14:14)*

***What is the outcome then? I shall pray with the spirit and I shall pray with my mind also; I shall sing with the spirit and I shall sing with my mind also.**  
(1 Corinthians 14:15)*

*If you bless in the **spirit only** ... you are giving thanks well enough, but the **other man is not edified**. (1 Corinthians 14:16-17)*

***I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all;** (1 Corinthians 14:18)*

- Why did Paul say that? **(Let each one give his own answer)**