

# The Spirit

## ... and His Gifts

In the last chapter we talked about a set of gifts which we're calling, "The Motivational Gifts," listed in Romans 12. It seems that these gifts are ones that are sort of "possessed" by members of the Body of Christ. Paul indicates this by his language in describing them, "If a man's gift is... If his gift is..." These gifts seem to function through an individual's personality and be part of the way he or she views the needs of others, and how they might meet that need.

But now we'll look at another set of gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12, which we'll call, "The Gifts of the Spirit." These gifts seem to function quite differently than the previous ones. In this paper we'll focus on these gifts, what they are, how they work, and what they're used for. The following is the passage we'll pay most attention to in this chapter. You'll do best to read the entire 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> chapters of 1 Corinthians in order to get the whole context of Paul's teaching on the Gifts of the Spirit.

***Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of the one and same Spirit, and he gives them to each one just as he determines.***

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Before we study these gifts, let's take the little quiz on the next page to see how much you actually know about the Holy Spirit.

# WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT?

1) The Holy Spirit is called the "Holy Ghost" because:

- A. He can appear and disappear like a ghost
- B. He is actually the ghost of Jesus
- C. The old English word for 'spirit' was 'ghost'

2) Which best describes the Holy Spirit?

(Jn. 16:7,8,13,14; Eph. 4:30; Ac. 5:3,4; 13:2; 15:28; In. 14:26; 2 Cor. 13:14)

- A. The divine force of God
- B. God's power given to man
- C. The third member of the Trinity - a Divine Person

3) One of the Names of the Holy Spirit, "Comforter" means:

- A. Sympathizer
- B. Helper
- C. A blanket

4) The Holy Spirit came to earth for the first time on the Day of Pentecost. True or False?

5) Name as many of His duties (His works) as you can:

(Rev. 22:17; Gal. 5:22; Rom. 8:15; Rom. 8:2; John 14:26; Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:26; Rom.8:16)

He helps us \_\_\_\_\_

7) What are the 2 New Testament terms for the experience of the believer being empowered by the Spirit? (Matt. 3:11; Eph. 5:18)

Being \_\_\_\_\_ IN the Spirit

Being \_\_\_\_\_ WITH the Spirit

8) We receive the Baptism in the Spirit by:

- A. being spiritually mature enough
- B. learning to speak in tongues
- C. asking

10) How do we receive the Baptism in the Spirit? (Luke 11 :13; Galatians 3:2; John 20:22)  
What are the 3 things you must do?

\_\_\_\_\_

## ANSWERS:

1) (C) The old English word for 'spirit' was 'ghost'

2) (C) The third member of the Trinity - a Divine Person

Notice in the passages which follow how the Holy Spirit is referred to repeatedly as, "He" or "Him;" and how he may be "grieved," "lied to," how He "leads," and how He "teaches." These are all very obvious indications of His personality, of His personhood. Don't refer to the Spirit as "it!" He's not an "it," He's a He!

- John 16:7 Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt ...
- John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will bring glory to me ...
- Eph. 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
- Acts 5:3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so tilled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit ... You have not lied to men but to God."
- John 14:26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit ... will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.
- 2Cor. 13:14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

3) (B) Helper. The Greek term means that he's the one who come along side of us to help.

4) False. In the first chapter of the Bible the Spirit is said to have "brooded" over the face of the waters in creation. He's eternal as well as omnipresent.

5) Notice in the passages referred to these duties of the Holy Spirit: He helps us come to Christ, to live like Christ, to know God as Father, to overcome sin, to understand and remember truth, to witness to pre-christians, to pray, to know we're saved ...

6) Word of Knowledge, Word of Wisdom, Discerning of spirits, Prophecy, Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues, Faith, Healing, Miracles.

7) "Baptized in the Spirit" and "Filled with the Spirit"

8) (C) By asking. See Luke 11:13

9) For power to serve Christ and others, primarily in sharing the good news with pre-christians.

10) Ask (Luke 11:13); believe (Galatians 3:2); and receive (John 20:22)

## • THE GIFTS DEFINED AND IDENTIFIED

There seem to be three categories of these gifts, three groupings. There are gifts which help us **know** something of what God knows, **speak** something of what God is speaking, and **do** something of what He is doing.

Though we can't be dogmatic about these exact definitions of each gift, from their exercise in the Bible we can surmise the following. I encourage you to look up the passages which give examples of these gifts, and may your faith to practice these gifts yourself increase as you do.

### 1. INFORMATION - The 'Knowing' Gifts

- 1) *The Word of Knowledge*: The supernatural impartation of a fragment of divine knowledge. (1 Samuel 9:19, 20,10:22; II Kings 5:26,6:9-12; John 1:47-48,4:16-18; Matthew 21 :2; Mark 14:13; Luke 22:34)
- 2) *The Word of Wisdom*: A fragment of divine wisdom given by supernatural means. (Genesis 41 :33-36; Luke 4:12,7:22, 12:11-12; Matthew 21 :25,22:21,41-46; John 4:21; Acts 23:6)
- 3) *Discerning of Spirits*: The supernatural enablement to know the origin or cause of an event, words or state. (Acts 5:3-6; 16:17-18; Matt. 16:23; Luke 13:16; 9:55)

### 2. INSPIRATION - The 'Speaking' Gifts

- 1) *Prophecy*: The proclamation of God's mind and will at a specific time to a specific people. (1 Cor. 14:1,3-5,25,29-33, 39)
- 2) *Tongues*: The public utterance of a God given, unlearned language to be succeeded by an interpretation. (I Cor. 12:28, 30, 14:6, 26, 27)
- 3) *Interpretation of Tongues*: The proclamation of God's mind and will at a specific time, to a specific people, preceded by a public utterance of tongues. (I Cor. 12:30, 14:5, 13,26-28)

### 3. IMPARTATION - The 'Doing' Gifts

- 1) *Faith*: The sudden surge of supernatural certainty for a certain situation. (I Kings 17:1, 18:20-40; Joshua 10:12; Mark 11 :22; Acts 3:6, 16,9:40)
- 2) *Healing*: The supernatural cure of physical illness or injury. (Isaiah 53:3-5; Matthew 8:16-17; Mark 16:17-18; Exodus 15:26, I Peter 2:24; James 5: 13-16)
- 3) *Miracles*: Divine supercession of "natural law" for the purpose of protection or provision of people. (Exodus 14:16-22; I Kings 2:19-21; 4:38-41; Matthew 8:26; Exodus 17:6,10:12-14; Matthew 14:19-20,17:27)

# • THINGS WHICH ARE TRUE ABOUT THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

## 1 . The Gifts of the Spirit are all available to any follower of Jesus that's full of the Spirit.

*" ... but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good ... and He gives them to each one, just as He determines." (1 Corinthians 12:6-7, 11)*

Jesus began His supernatural ministry after He was anointed with the Spirit at His baptism (Luke 3:21-23). The first sermon He preached publicly could have been called, "Why Am I Anointed?" because He began the message with the words, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because ... " (Luke 4: 18-19). He went on to reveal why the Spirit had come upon Him, " ... because He has anointed Me to preach. .. proclaim good news ... to release the oppressed ... " It was from that point on that Jesus began to heal the sick, raise the dead, speak prophetically. In other words, He began utilizing the gifts that the Spirit provided Him.

Then He told His disciples that these same gifts would be available to them (and all those who, from then on, would follow Him and receive that same Holy Spirit) ...

- *"... these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; speak in new tongues ... they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." (Mark 16:17-18)*
- *" ... believe (in Me) on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12)*

## 2. The Gifts of the Spirit are distributed by the Spirit as He determines.

*" ... He gives them to each one just as He determines." (1 Corinthians 12:11 )*

That is, we are not in control of when they operate, with whom they operate, nor through whom they operate. We don't heal people, deliver people, or work miracles for people. That's the Holy Spirit's job. He gets to decide when the gifts are to be activated and when they're not. He's sovereignly in charge of their distribution. He empowers us to prophesy, to heal the sick, to work miracles *where, when, and with whom* He chooses.

## 3. The Gifts of the Spirit are distributed through us.

*" ... He gives them to each one, just as He determines." (1 Corinthians 12:11)*

We are the delivery people for heaven. We are His Heavenly Parcel Service (HPS)! The Spirit determines when the gifts are to be used; and when He thus determines, He determines them to be used through people, people like us. God has done, and will continue to do miracles without us, but His chief *modus operandi* is to use people to

deliver miracles to other people. The miracles come from heaven (from God) but are delivered to people by other Spirit-filled people on earth.

#### **4. The Gifts of the Spirit operate through us when we seek to be used by God to help others.**

*“... eagerly desire the greater gifts...” (1 Corinthians 12:31, 14:1)*

Though they are distributed by the Spirit just as He sovereignly determines, we have something to do with His sovereign choice. It's not as though we have the ability to change His mind about anything, but we do have a role to play in agreeing with that choice by yearning to be an adequate conduit through which He works to help others. We can't *earn* these gifts, but certainly we must *yearn* to pass them out to people who need them. We have something to do with whether or not God will work His works through us to help people.

Notice we're commanded to *“eagerly desire”* these gifts to work among us. It's not a suggestion. It's not recommended. We're *ordered* to want them, to passionately yearn for the miracle workings of God to flow through us to others. Why is it that we don't see more of the gifts functioning in our daily lives? One reason might be that we don't want them bad enough. We don't seem to have any “eager desire” for them.

**We are the delivery people  
for heaven... God's  
Heavenly Parcel Service!**

#### **5. The Gifts of the Spirit are used by people who love other people enough to want to help them with supernatural power.**

*“... eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing...” (1 Corinthians 12:31 – 13:3)*

God doesn't usually distribute His gifts through show-offs, to people who are looking for the applause and approval of others. Genuine care about others is a key to the flow of the supernatural through us. If you want to be a channel through which God shares His power to help people, you'll probably have to love people more. If you desire to be employed with the “Heavenly Parcel Service,” you'll have to live to serve the needs of others. The *“most excellent way”* is the way of love.

#### **6. The Gifts of the Spirit are directed to human need, therefore the “greater gift (the best gift)” is the gift needed at the time.**

*"... eagerly desire the greater gifts..." (1 Corinthians 12:31, 14:1)*

That is, if someone's lying in the street injured, the "best gift" is not tongues or interpretation of tongues - it's healing! If someone is struggling with an inner healing issue, the "best gift" might be a word of knowledge, or discerning of spirits. When presented with a person's need, we ought to be looking, seeking earnestly for the gift which will solve their problem and bring glory to God!

To sum up the last three thoughts:

- The BEST METHOD to enter the use of the gifts is to *"earnestly desire"* them
- The BEST WAY to practice them is out of a heart of *"love"*
- The BEST GIFT is the one needed at the time

## **7. The Gifts of the Spirit are not presents as much as announcements of His Presence.**

*"... the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good ... the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'" (1 Corinthians 12:7; 14:25)*

The gifts are called "gifts" not because they're like presents under a Christmas tree with our name on them, something to play with when we're bored with the Christian life. The term for 'gift' in the Greek New Testament is "charis," which is also the term used for "grace" in the Bible. That is, when God distributes gifts He does so on the basis of His grace. They're His 'grace-gifts.' He doesn't give them because of our spiritual toil and sweat. We don't earn them. Out of the undeserved resources of His grace He uses us to help one another.

God doesn't usually distribute His gifts through show-offs, to people who are looking for the applause and approval of others.

The gifts are *announcements of His Presence* in the sense that when He is present His gifts tend to be in operation. They're called the *"manifestation of the Spirit"* because, when the gifts are functioning they manifest, reveal, and give evidence of the Presence of the Spirit of God. When they operate, people have a tendency to say, *"God is really among you!"*

## **8. The Gifts of the Spirit are not permanent abilities, but momentary powers.**

*"For this reason anyone who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret what he says." (1 Corinthians 14:13)*

These gifts, as opposed to the gifts listed in Romans 12 (the Motivational Gifts), are not part of our personality, they're not our possessions. They're not something we have in our keeping and may use at our will. They function more like a sailboat which sails only when the wind blows.

The Motivational Gifts (the server, the giver, the teacher, etc.) could be described as "what we are." While the Gifts of the Spirit are the supernatural equipment with which to function while we're being what we are. The Motivational Gifts function through our personality, the Gifts of the Spirit function when we seek them (1 Cor. 12:31) and when God wills them (1 Cor. 12:11).

## **9. The Gifts of the Spirit are not so much something you have, but something you give.**

*"... The manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good ... try to excel in gifts that build up the church." (1 Corinthians 12:7; 14: 12)*

We're merely distributors, delivery persons (H.P.S,) of His gifts to the next person. As we've said, it's not so much that these gifts are in our possession, as with the gifts in Romans 12. They're not really *our* gifts. If anything - the person who received the benefit of the gift is most likely the one who 'received' the gift of the Spirit. The one who gets healed got the gift of healing more than the one who delivered it. Say you order pizza to be delivered to your house. Who gets the pizza - the guy who delivers it, or you?

## **10. The Gifts of the Spirit are not dependent on methods and style, but flow through the personalities and preferences of people.**

*"There are different kinds of service ... different kinds of working ... " (1 Corinthians 12:5-6)*

There is no standardized way to prophesy. There's no right or wrong style or method to deliver a gift of the Spirit. Some will prophesy with Elizabethan English (from the King James version of the Bible), others will give their prophecies in everyday language of the street (minus the cursing, of course). Some will deliver a word loudly and emotionally another may almost whisper it stoically.

The one who gets healed  
got the gift of healing more  
than the one who delivered it.

When the Holy Spirit uses us, He does just that - He uses US. That is, He works through our personalities and preferences. I refer you to the prophetic books of the Bible. Notice the varying styles and idiosyncrasies of each. They're not identical - or even close. One was poetic (Isaiah); another homespun (Amos). One spoke like a diplomat (Daniel); another like a philosopher (Habakkuk). But they each spoke on God's

behalf in their own way, like each of us should when called upon to do so.

## **11. The Gifts of the Spirit are not forced on us, but flow through us as we learn to cooperate.**

*"Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said. And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop. For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged. The spirits of the prophets are subject to the control of the prophets." (1 Corinthians 14:29-32)*

It's not accurate to say, *"I couldn't help it, the Holy Spirit forced me to say what I said ... I couldn't stop myself ... I couldn't wait for the proper time in the service ... He overwhelmed me and made me do it. .."* No doubt, His power is great and may at times be overwhelming. When the Spirit is upon us to deliver a gift to someone He can be very persuasive. But honestly, He's not interested in *forcing* you to deliver anything. He's looking for willing vessels through which to pour out His gifts.

This means that you can submit to the proper timing in a church service to prophesy. You can speak out a word from the Lord in such a way as to aid people in actually *hearing* what you're saying by saying it clearly and concisely. You can resist if you choose, and you can respond if you choose. I sincerely hope you will respond to the Spirit's promptings and consent (even desire) to be one of his delivery persons for His gifts.

## **CONCLUSION**

***"Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant."***

Now that you've looked at the foundational essentials of these gifts you are no longer *"ignorant."* But don't stop with being *informed*; get *involved*. Get your feet wet, step out in faith, trusting the Spirit to use you as His delivery person to help someone else with God's supernatural power!