

Spiritual Growth Lessons

LESSON 28 of 32

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT I

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant" (1 Corinthians 12:1).

It is the will of God for us to have a proper understanding of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. What is a proper definition for the Biblical term "gifts of the Spirit?" Many people think that this refers to natural abilities to give counseling, speak effectively, etc. But this is not the answer!

The gifts of the Spirit are: a divine and supernatural enablement to know certain things, or to do certain things, or to speak certain things. These gifts are identified in 1 Corinthians 12:8-11, and can be classified as follows:

1. Administrative Gifts (to know):

Word of Wisdom
Word of Knowledge
Discerning of Spirits

These gifts are helpful in the administration of the church.

2. Evangelism or Ministry Gifts (to do):

Faith
Gifts of Healing
Working of Miracles

These are especially helpful in reaching the lost with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, and also ministering to physical and emotional needs that exist in the body of Christ.

3. Revelation or Communication Gifts (to speak):

Prophecy
Tongues
Interpretation of Tongues

We will now look at a brief description of each gift, and an example where these gifts were ministered by Jesus, and also by the apostles.

1. Word of Wisdom: Supernatural wisdom that goes far beyond the wisdom of the individual to deal with a certain situation. Examples: Jesus: Matthew 22:15-46 James: Acts 15

2. Word of Knowledge: This is not the gift of knowledge, but the word of knowledge. The unction or anointing of the spirit comes upon a person to impart to them facts about people, places, things, or events which they could not possibly know without the Spirit revealing it to them. Examples: Jesus: John 4:16-29 Peter: Acts 5:1-9

3. Discerning of Spirits: The ability to recognize Satanic spirits in a person, or using a person. There is no Biblical requirement that we must be able to identify each spirit in order that we may deal with it. However, Jesus often did call spirits by name when commanding them to leave. This gift can also be a divine enablement to discern whether something is a result of the human spirit, rather than the Spirit of God. Examples: Jesus: Luke 9:42 Paul: Acts 16:16-18



4. Gift of Faith: This is a supernatural faith which exhibits itself when impossible circumstances come our way and we need a miracle--a financial need, a door opened to preach the gospel, the intervention of God in a certain situation, or a sickness healed. When this supernatural faith takes hold of us, we can make bold statements and we will see results! Examples: Jesus: John 4:50-52 Peter: Acts 3:6

5. Gifts of Healing: Notice that the Bible says "gifts," not "gift." It seems to this writer that some people are used of God in praying only for specific diseases, such as cancer, etc. However, if a person has all of the gifts of healing, he can be used of God in praying for all the sick. If a person is prayed for and at that moment they began to get better, this is proof that the gift of healing for that particular sickness is in operation. If a person is prayed for and they are instantly healed, it was more than just a gift of healing, it was the gift of miracles in operation. Examples: Jesus: Matthew 9:35 Phillip: Acts 8:5-7

6. The Working of Miracles: While there is some overlapping between the working of miracles and the gifts of healing, the working of miracles goes far beyond the scope of healing. Healing is confined to the realm of the human body, but miracles includes the totality of creation. In this gift, a supernatural power is released by God through a person's life to effect a supernatural healing or other happening. Examples: Jesus: John 2:1-11 Acts 28:3-5

7. Gift of Prophecy: Prophecy can be divided into two parts: forthtelling, and foretelling:

a. Forthtelling: Forthtelling is to retell that which has already happened. Each time we preach from the Word of God, we retell the lives of individuals, the miracles of the Bible, etc. This is forthtelling. A sermon preached under the anointing of the Holy Ghost (and even an anointed testimony) is a form of prophesying. But this is not the gift of prophecy.

b. Foretelling: Foretelling is the utterance concerning things to come. The gift of prophecy can be either forthtelling, or foretelling. The difference is that in normal preaching or testifying, the messages come from the mind of the preacher or the speaker. But when the gift of prophecy is in operation, there will be a divine utterance of words that are spoken by the individual that have come direct from the mind of God. It is similar to and sounds the same as the interpretation of tongues, except it is not preceded by tongues.

Many preachers, while preaching under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, will begin to say things they never planned to say. Sometimes they themselves marvel at what came out of their mouth. The gift can also operate in this manner. Example: Jesus: Matthew 24:2 Different Believers: Acts 20:22-23

8. Gift of Tongues: Actually, the Bible does not call this gift the "gift of tongues," but rather "divers (or different) kinds of tongues" (I Corinthians 12:28). This can be divided into two parts:

a. speaking in tongues for personal edification.

b. speaking in tongues for church edification.

I Corinthians, Chapter 14, governs the use of this gift and the gift of prophecy.

9. Interpretation of Tongues: Notice that it does not say "translation of tongues," but "interpretation of tongues." There is a difference! The tongues might be much longer or shorter than the message. Examples: The church at Antioch: Acts 13:1-2

Other examples of the gifts of the Spirit in operation: Using the preceding information to recognize and identify the gifts of the Spirit, let the student study the following verses of Scripture:

Jesus: Matthew 8:2-3; 14-16; 24-27; 9:1-7; 12:10-13; 14:15-21; 16:21-23; 21:18-22

Apostles: Acts 5:12-16; 9:10-18; 10:9-17; 27-28; 13:6-12; 14:8-11; 14:19-20 *ds*