



# Gift of the Spirit

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# GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

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## **MODULE 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The nine gifts of the Holy Spirit are mentioned specifically in 1 Corinthians Chapters 12 to 14. Whilst their manifestations are seen in the ministry of Christ and the exploits of the early church in Acts, 1 Corinthians 12 - 14 is the only place in Scripture where they are dealt with in teaching. The three gifts dealt with in detail are Prophecy, Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues, but their setting and context teach us a great deal about the others.

### **A. GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT AS COMPARED TO OTHER GIFTS:**

The Godhead is very benevolent and Each has given gifts freely. To deal with them generally causes confusion. Each gift is exclusive and unique with no duplicate. Yet each gift harmonises with the others as the colours in a rainbow to fulfil God's purpose.

#### 1. The Gifts of the Father:

- (a) Gifts in general - James 1:17
- (b) Temporal gifts - Genesis 27:28;  
Ecclesiastes 3:13; 5:19;  
Psalm 37:4;  
Isaiah 30:23
- (c) Grace - John 4:10;  
Acts 5:31; 11:18;  
Romans 6:23;  
Eph. 2:8;  
I John 5:11
- (d) The Gift of His Son - Isaiah 9:6;  
II Cor. 9:15;  
John 3:16;  
Romans 6:23

#### 2. The Gifts of the Son:

- (a) Ascension Ministry Gifts to the Church - Ephesians 4:7-12
- (b) Through His sacrifice and resurrection all Gifts of God flow - Romans 8:23

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(c) The Gift of the Holy Spirit - Acts 2:33, 38; Luke 24:49

3. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit:

These are clearly set out in I Corinthians 12:1-11

4. General Gifts in the Church: - Romans 12:4-8

Some refer to these as motivational gifts, but these are functions in the church of a different order (excluding prophecy) from that of the Gifts of the Spirit.

## **B. GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT DEFINED:**

I Corinthians 12:8-10 sets out nine gifts which can be linked in three groups:

1. The Gifts of Revelation

- (a) Word of Wisdom
- (b) Word of Knowledge
- (c) Discerning of Spirits

2. The Gifts of Power

- (a) The Gift of Faith
- (b) Working of Miracles
- (c) The Gifts of Healings

3. The Vocal Gifts (Inspiration)

- (a) Prophecy
- (b) Tongues
- (c) Interpretation of Tongues

## **C. QUALIFYING THE TERM "GIFT"**

It should be noted the word "gift" does not occur in the original Greek. In 1Corinthians 12:1 Paul used the word "Pneumatikos" or "spirituals". In 1Corinthians 12:4 the word "charisma" means "a grace, favour or kindness".

From this it would seem a better term would be "manifestation". Coneybeare & Howsen translate it as "the outflashings of the Spirit". In I Corinthians 12:7 the Greek word is "phanerosis" meaning "a shining forth".

## **D. HOW DO THE GIFTS OPERATE?**

There has always been controversy over this question. Some contend that the gift is permanently resident (eg. II Tim. 1:6). Others suggest the gift is not actually resident in the person, but the Holy Spirit chooses to use whoever is available at any given time and provides a manifestation.

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The question seems to involve who is responsible for the reception and ministering of the gift. It would appear the believer is responsible to desire, seek for and make himself available to the Holy Spirit. The grammar of I Corinthians 12:11 infers the Holy Spirit chooses to use the vessel. Once used a tributary, capacity or sensitivity is awakened which can be used by the Holy Spirit again and again at His discretion. It is the believer's responsibility to keep the tributary clear and the sensitivity awakened.

The plurality of Tongues, Working of Miracles, Gifts of Healings coupled with the singular "another" (I Cor. 12: 8-10) denotes the Holy Spirit grants the manifestation when necessary in the form of a gift. This is then to be ministered by the recipient for the fulfilment of God's purposes. (eg. Acts 3:6 - Peter – "Such as I have give I thee.")

The administration of the manifestation is at the discretion and wisdom of the recipient.

The Holy Spirit does not take over the believer but works in co-operation with him or her.

## **E. THE ALLOCATION OF THE GIFTS:**

There is no doubt from I Corinthians 12:18 and 27-30 that God has the final choice as to who functions in what spiritual capacity in the church.

However, we must not adopt the "if God wants me to have it; He'll give it to me" attitude. We are exhorted:

- (a) Not to be ignorant of them      I Cor. 2:1; 14:38
- (b) To covet them earnestly      I Cor. 12:31
- (c) To desire and seek for them      I Cor. 14:1
- (d) To learn to operate them correctly so that we may excel for the edifying of the church.

I Corinthians 14:1, 5, 12-13, 31, encourage all to seek for the vocal gifts.

I Corinthians 12 indicates that generally speaking most exercise only some of the gifts (often only one). However, history and present day records tells us that there are those who have been exercised in all nine. Martin Luther is one of these.

It would seem foolish for the scripture to speak so strongly regarding coveting the gifts if there was no possibility of receiving. The problem seems to be one of capacity rather than possibility.

A good way of expressing the operation is that the “outflashings” of the Spirit are the result of the anointing on the Christ-life within the believer.

The “best gifts” mentioned in verse 31 would be the best for the calling and need of the occasion.

#### **F. THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFTS:**

##### **1. They are for Body Ministry**

- (a) The word “body” is used 18 times in I Corinthians 12. The gifts are couched between discourse on the body of Christ and the church body including ministry gifts.
- (b) Christ took a body to bring the revelation of the character, nature and purposes of God. Until His baptism in the Spirit, this revelation was mainly passive. The anointing of the Spirit brought a positive, powerful and dynamic expression of the nature and character of God through the manifestation of the Gifts of the Spirit.
- (c) Without the anointing of the Spirit enabling the church to minister supernaturally, the gospel presentation would be largely in the realm of philosophy and ceremonials. The fruit of the Spirit present a mainly passive revelation. The dynamic of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit bring positive and powerful expression of His nature and character.

##### **2. They are Manifestations of Deity**

In the Gifts of the Spirit we have a literal expression of Deity through men. God shines forth through them. The Gifts of the Spirit divide into groups which reveal the attributes of God:

- (a) Wisdom, Knowledge, Discerning of Spirits - OMNISCIENCE - LIGHT - PURPOSE - denoting intelligence
- (b) Faith, Healing, Miracles - OMNIPOTENCE - LIFE - POWER
- (c) Prophecy, Tongues, Interpretation - OMNIPRESENCE - LOVE - PRESENCE - language denotes personality

Thus bringing to us a revelation of the Purpose, Power and Presence of God, which is totally beyond the capacity of man to manufacture.

These gifts, it has been observed, also express the essential characteristics of God:

- (a) The Diffusion of the Divine Light
- (b) The Demonstration of the Divine Life
- (c) The Demonstration of Divine Love

They also express the Personality of God: - INTELLIGENCE – WILL – EMOTION

### 3. They Emphasise the Need for Unity and the Church Body

Many believers assert they are spiritual by “going it alone”. However 1Corinthians 12:12-27 very clearly sets out the major reason for the diverse Gifts of the Spirit being distributed to the total strata of the Church. It is so that the assembly can function as does a body - each part having importance, inter-dependence and special significance.

Each gift is essential, each person is valued. None can be done without. The true church pattern is not to have a group of people being ministered to by an elite minority (ministers) but to have the whole group both congregation and preachers ministering to and for the Lord with supernatural endowment.

### 4. Internally They are for the Edification of the Body

Ephesians 4:16 speaks of mutual care and building up of each member through all the ministries. The Gifts are the nine spiritual senses of the church bringing supernatural nourishment and aid to the body.

### 5. Externally They are the Weapons of our Warfare - II Cor. 10:4

- (a) Revelation Gifts - Radar Acts 5:1-4, 16:16
- (b) Power Gifts - Heavy artillery Acts 3; Acts 8:5-7
- (c) Vocal Gifts - Healing, refreshment, morale and inspiration 1 Cor. 14:6-12

Jesus became militant at Jordan, and the early church at Pentecost. As the days approach the coming of Christ, we can expect to see a greater ministry of the vocal gifts on the floor of the church and an increasing exercising of the revelation and power gifts in public, rather than just at the altar of the church.

## **MODULE TWO**

### **COMPLEMENTARY TRUTHS TO THE OPERATION OF THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT**

In the Scriptures the Gifts of the Spirit are closely associated with the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. An understanding of this is very important to the receiving of the gifts and their ongoing flow of manifestations. In John 14:17 and Acts 1:8 Jesus informs us the Spirit of God functions in the believer's life in three ways; “with you”, “in you” and “upon you”.

It is interesting to note that Jesus did not manifest the gifts until the Spirit came "upon Him" (Matthew 3:16). Jesus was not indwelt of the Spirit. He had no need of the "new birth". The Holy Spirit had been with Him but it was not until His baptism with the Holy Spirit that the gifts began to be exercised in His ministry.

Similarly, the gifts of the Spirit began to be manifested in the early church after the outpouring of the Spirit in Acts 2.

In I Corinthians 12-14 the gifts are incorporated into the ministry of the body of Christ ie. the church. Although the Apostles, and then the seventy had been given a special mandate of ministry under the Old Covenant (Matthew 10:1; Luke 10:1), the church was not born until the Resurrection morning (John 20:22; Romans 10:9; 6:3-4). In obedience to the command of Jesus in Acts 1:8 they received the outpouring of the Spirit (ie. the "coming upon" as Jesus had), in order to continue His ministry through the church (John 14:12; Luke 24:46-49).

From that time the Gifts of the Spirit began to flow in the ministry of the New Testament church.

## **I. THIS LEADS US TO TWO VERY IMPORTANT EXPERIENCES ASSOCIATED WITH THE GIFTS:**

### **A. THE NEED FOR A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT**

1. The operation of the Gifts of the Spirit is not a science. While much may be learned by sharing, those who flow freely in the gifts do so by developing a growing relationship with the Holy Spirit.
2. The Holy Spirit is the "Paracletos" Jesus sent (John 14). He is our Advocate on earth as Jesus is in heaven.
3. The relationship is developed by a growing respect and higher valuation of the Person of the Holy Spirit. It also involves an understanding of His nature and ways.

### **B. REGULAR COMMUNION WITH AND HONOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT SHOULD BRING A GROWING SENSITIVITY**

This is necessary for a real flowing in the gifts. The spirit-filled believer has spiritual senses as well as natural senses. These grow through the renewing of the mind and exercise (Hebrews 5:12-14) (esp. v.14). It is in this realm the gifts operate.

## **II. A RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES IN RELATION TO THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT**

The Gifts of the Spirit are related to “dunamis” power received at the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Authority (“exousia”) is received at conversion. As tongues are given at the reception of “dunamis” power, there is a direct relationship.

### **A. IT IS QUITE EVIDENT IN SCRIPTURE THERE ARE TWO MAJOR PURPOSES FOR WHICH THE ABILITY TO SPEAK IN UNKNOWN LANGUAGES IS GIVEN:**

1. As initial evidence of reception of Baptism in the Holy Spirit. This is clearly seen in Acts.
2. This given ability opens up a supernatural communication with God. While the first experience is the beginning, it is continuous exercise that brings the fruit God intended. Paul teaches us that this continuous exercise should be mainly in private devotion. Diligence here will bring public manifestations of the gifts listed in I Cor. 12.

### **B. TO UNDERSTAND (A), A KNOWLEDGE OF THE BACKGROUND OF PAUL’S TEACHING TO THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH IS NECESSARY. IN THAT ASSEMBLY THEY WERE EXERCISING TONGUES VERY FREELY, AND IN THE MIDST THE MANIFESTATION OF THE GIFTS WAS ALSO IN EVIDENCE. THERE WAS CONFUSION AND PROFUSION.**

1. It is evident their sin was ignorance; in other matters as well as this:
  - (a) Divisions over leaders - 1:11-17
  - (b) Misconstruction on marriage - 5:1-2; chap. 7.
  - (c) Carnal attitude to the Lord’s table - 11:17-34; 10:16-22
2. Paul writes to correct them. He says “I would not have you be ignorant”.
  - (a) The second Epistle reveals they were teachable.
  - (b) The fact that they were wrong in usage does not detract from the fact they loved to speak in tongues - 14:23.
  - (c) In chapter 14 it is noted Paul reveals a distinction between the initial evidence and the gift. Compare 14:23 with 12:30 and 14:1.

**THE CONCLUSION DRAWN FROM THE PASSAGES IS THAT NOT ONLY DID PAUL TEACH CONTROL OF THE TONGUE IN INITIAL EVIDENCE BUT CONTROL BECAUSE OF PROFUSION OF MANIFESTATIONS OF VOCAL GIFTS**



eg. Niagara Falls - power running wild - but a mighty servant when harnessed.  
eg. I Cor. 14: 39-40.

- The fact to note is that one was there because of the other. Free use of tongues brought free use of vocal gifts.
- The wrong usage of the one led to wrong usage of the other.
- Lack of profusion of vocal gifts and others is in proportion to lack of use of our ability to commune with God privately in tongues. We do not grow into gifts, we grow in capacity and desire. This is a principle of Scripture (Matt. 6:4-6; I Cor. 14:18). We therefore need to learn and exercise in private devotion.

### **C. SOME HELPS IN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT**

1. The Holy Spirit gives us unknown languages.
  - (a) They are not emotional babblings.
  - (b) This was proved on the Day of Pentecost and in modern times.
  - (c) The miracle is such that speech difficulties are overcome. (eg. Swedes speaking English pronounce words correctly, etc.)
2. This leads us to note the following; if we exercise:-
  - (a) The language will develop as we speak regularly, as in the development of vocabulary, etc.
  - (b) As in all languages, we will recognise sentences and clauses.
  - (c) From time to time a change of language may be evident (I Cor.13:1).
  - (d) Control of the flesh will bring deeper beauty (I Cor. 9:26).
3. The purpose of speaking with Tongues.
  - (a) As a means of communication with God (I Cor.14:2).
  - (b) We must admit to a great mystery in the linking of our spirits to God;
  - (c) But there is a link that is outside our five senses:
    - i. We often hear that the only gateways to the soul are through the eyes, ears and the mind.
    - ii. At times these are important, but read I Cor. 2:9-12 (esp. v.9).
  - (d) It is in this spiritual realm there is the communion of the spirit with God (John 4:24). Two ways:
    - i. The presence of God on us.
    - ii. Our speaking in tongues (Ps 42:7 is an example).

### **D. WHAT TAKES PLACE WHEN WE SPEAK IN TONGUES?**

1. We speak unto God. (I Cor. 14:2 - majesty)

2. We pray according to the mind of the Spirit ( I Cor. 14:15; Rom.8:26-27 - perfect prayer and worship).
3. We give thanks well (I Cor. 14:17 - This is good manners as we don't know all God does for us).
4. We edify self (I Cor. 14:4).  
"Edifies" = "to build up"

The difference between teaching and edification is the same as the difference between a meal on the table and a meal in the stomach - learning is assimilated.

By speaking in tongues we edify ourselves - through the gifts we edify the church. There is a mysterious, wonderful link between the two which allows scope for the operation of the Holy Spirit, especially in the vocal gifts.

### **E. ARE THE GIFTS "GUESSWORK"?**

Some advocate speaking that which comes into the mind. This is a dangerous practice as it opens one up to "mind flashes" from the enemy, and to "imagination".

While it is possible to be used in some gifts (eg. the Word of Wisdom and Gift of Faith) without realising it until afterwards, all the other gifts are attended by definite witnesses (I Cor. 14:8).

## **MODULE THREE**

### **THE GIFT OF THE WORD OF KNOWLEDGE**

This gift, together with the gift of Discerning of Spirits, could be termed the "eyes of the church".

#### **A. DEFINITION**

The Word of Knowledge is the supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit of a fact or facts in the mind of God to the believer.

God knows all past, present and future facts, whether in heaven, the universe or hell. There is nothing He does not know. The Word of Knowledge is the impartation of some detail of this knowledge. It could not be known by the receiver in any other way at that time.