

# The Gifts Of The Spirit

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# Introduction

When we read the book of Acts, it is clear that the church today is not experiencing the same measure of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as did the early church. Before Jesus returns, this will no longer be the case. The church is on a time line that will plunge today's church into an even greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit than the early church experienced.

The early church began the church age and had great impact because of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. When we read the book of Acts, we can't help but notice the impact of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the church. They were few in number and now the church is made up of untold millions of born again Spirit filled Christians. What impact do you suppose the church today will have as God pours out the Spirit as He promised to do?

The scripture paints a clear picture in the book of Joel of God's army that will march through the land before the end. They will be strong and do exploits in the name of the Lord.

Every promise that God has ever given to the church will come to pass before the end of the church age. There are many unfulfilled promises still waiting to be fulfilled and not one Word of God's promises will fall to the ground unfulfilled.

It wasn't long after the book of Acts that the church began to lose its zeal and purpose. The church entered into what is commonly referred to as the dark ages. The Scripture was hidden away and the revelation that once brought such life and power to the church was all but forgotten. It wasn't until the time of Martin Luther in the mid-1500's that the church began to experience a new awakening of revelation. God began to give revelation and the outpouring of His Spirit back to the church in various ways.

If we continue to track church history, we see a revisitation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit around the turn of the 20th century.

God is rapidly preparing the church for its finest hour in which we live. The best and most intense visitation of God that this world has ever experienced will happen as we reach a climax of the outpouring of the Spirit and the revelation of God's Word.

Like many of you, I have been in services where God poured out a measure of His Spirit but the Word was lacking. The Spirit of God was present to move in the gifts of the Spirit but the meetings lacked direction and lasting fruit. Once the meetings ended, so did the outpouring. I have also been in services where a measure of the Word was present but the Spirit was not allowed to move freely. In the last days both the Word and the Spirit will be strong and the outpouring will have direction, purpose and lasting fruit.

As you read, allow your faith to soar and challenge yourself to strengthen your relationship with God. Take it upon yourself to gain a greater understanding and revelation of God's Word concerning the gifts of the Spirit. Ask the Lord to cultivate a new hunger in you for the Word and the moving of the His Spirit and to be used by Him in a greater way than ever before. Ask God to make you fruitful in your service to Him.

# Chapter One

## I Would Not Have You Ignorant

I would like to begin by listing the nine gifts of the Spirit in the order Paul listed them in 1 Corinthians 12:8-11.

The gifts of the Spirit are: the word of wisdom; the word of knowledge; faith; gifts of healings; the working of miracles; prophecy; discerning of spirits; different kinds of tongues and the interpretation of tongues.

Before we go any further into the nine gifts of the Spirit, I would like to lay a foundation by starting at the beginning of 1 Corinthians 12:1.

“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant.” (1 Cor 12:1)

Paul did not want the church of Corinth to be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts and I do not believe he would want the church today to be ignorant of spiritual gifts either. We know the passing of time is not the solution for ignorance because almost 2,000 years have passed since Paul wrote this and ignorance about spiritual gifts still has not been eliminated in the church.

Spiritual gifts are good and we are instructed to desire them; but how can we desire them if we don't know what they are? Someone could tell us that fish are good to eat and we should desire to go fishing, but unless we knew what fish looked like and where to find them, our fishing trip would not be very successful.

Ignorance is banished from our lives when the Holy Spirit reveals to us the truth of God's Word. The solution for ignorance may be simple but it requires diligence, discipline and consistent effort to eliminate it. Everyday we must place ourselves in an atmosphere of learning.

### Not everything spiritual comes from God.

“You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Cor 12:2-3)

The Corinthian church was full of Gentile believers that were idol worshipers before they came to the Lord. After they were saved and baptized in the Holy Spirit, they began to experience a move of God's power in their church services. The Corinthian

church had a genuine manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, but there were also other manifestations that were not of the Holy Spirit.

Paul was trying to help them see the difference between the manifestations of God's Spirit and the imitation that was also present. We must understand that not every manifestation of a spirit is a manifestation of God's Spirit.

In Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church he said to them. "*And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.*" (2 Cor 11:14) Paul's statement would indicate the Corinthians were still having some problems discerning the difference between the manifestation of the Holy Spirit and an evil spirit.

There are just as many people in the church today that struggle with knowing the difference between a true manifestation of God and a false one. Jesus said that the last days would be marked by deception and lying signs and wonders. He also said that if it were possible, even the very elect would be deceived. This tells me that we must make it a priority to know how to recognize the Great Shepherd's voice and follow Him wherever He leads us.

Paul was trying to teach the Corinthian church that not every manifestation of the spirit is from God. Now remember, Paul was talking to them about how to discern true and false manifestations during their church services. So don't think that just because we are in church singing and preaching and worshiping God, that the devil stays outside. It has been my experience that whenever the Spirit of God is at work, there is also lurking in the shadows a counterfeit manifestation seeking to disrupt what God is doing. The devil works in the shadows, attempting to distract, confuse and draw us away from the truth.

The pastor and other leaders of every church must judge each manifestation, and make sure every spiritual manifestation agrees with the written Word of God and glorifies Jesus. The Scripture says the Holy Spirit will magnify Jesus. The gifts of the Spirit will always do the same.

## Different kinds of gifts.

*"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit."* (1 Cor 12:4)

The Scripture says there are diversities of gifts. This means there is a variety of gifts, but they all originate or proceed from the same Holy Spirit. The nine gifts of the Spirit are very diverse. There is nothing that one or more of the nine gifts cannot accomplish.

We should note that these nine gifts of the Holy Spirit are completely different than the gifts and talents that God places in each of us at birth. Any of the gifts and talents God gives each of us at birth (such as: a singing gift; or a teaching gift; or a leadership gift; etc.) can be developed through practice, by usage and by experience. The nine gifts of the Holy Spirit are something very different than these other God given gifts.

The nine gifts of the Holy Spirit must also be distinguished from the five ministry gifts recorded in Ephesians chapter 4. Jesus gave these five ministry gifts to men for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry. They are: the apostle; prophet; evangelist; pastor and teacher.

The manifestations of Spirit that Paul was teaching the Corinthian church about, are a spontaneous manifestation of the Holy Spirit. One dictionary defines "spontaneous" as: "*Unconstrained and unstudied in manner or behavior. Growing without cultivation or*

*human labor; indigenous.*" The nine gifts of the Spirit are indigenous to the Holy Spirit. They are not indigenous to us.

We can't practice and develop any of the nine gifts of the Spirit in the same manner as we would practice and develop a singing gift. A singing gift cannot be developed in an unstudied manner. It doesn't grow without cultivation or human labor. A singing gift develops as we practice. We practice because we make a decision to do so. The gifts of the Spirit are not developed through practice or by an act of our human will. They are manifested as the Spirit wills.

A singing gift can be used anytime we choose to use it. We can sing in the shower or we can lead people into the presence of God in praise and worship. The gifts of the Spirit are given to us by God but we can't determine when and how they are to be used.

Each of the nine gifts of the Spirit are resident in the Holy Spirit and He is resident in us. Therefore, any of the nine gifts of the Spirit can be manifested in any believer, at any time, as the Spirit wills. This is what makes them spontaneous to us. They are not spontaneous to God. God will use the gifts of the Spirit anytime He chooses to use them.

It may help to understand the nine gifts of the Spirit by viewing them as a manifestation or expression of God's abilities, talents, knowledge, wisdom, faith, discernment, healings, utterances and miracle working power. God uses the gifts of the Spirit to take us to a higher level of ability and knowledge for a period of time; higher than we normally live in everyday.

## Different administrations.

"There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all." (1 Cor 12:5-6)

There are different and distinct administrations or ways that the gifts serve [or service] the church. There are different and distinct operations [effects or workings]. As I have witnessed these gifts in operation, it seems that the same gift usually manifests in different ways through different people. A gift can also manifest differently through the same person depending upon the individual circumstance or need. The Spirit of God is not limited. He can do anything He chooses to do through the gifts of the Spirit and will meet a variety of needs.

There are an infinite number of ways these gifts can and do work. Don't try to put them in a small box so they will fit neatly in your mind because they are bigger than your mind will allow. It is best to get general understanding of them and then let the Holy Spirit teach you how He wants to use you personally.

## They are given to believers for the profit of all.

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all." (1 Cor 12:7)

The word "manifestation" means: *"expression; exhibition; uncovering. An indication of the existence, reality, or presence of something. The revelation or uncovering of something. A materialized form of the spirit."*

The gifts or manifestation of the Spirit are not mysterious, nor are they reserved only for the pastor or other leaders. The nine gifts of the Spirit should be a normal part of every believer's life. The gifts are tools or equipment for the ministry. God gave the body of Christ the nine gifts, or manifestations of the Spirit, to bring profit to His body.

As glorious and exciting as the gifts are, we must not allow ourselves to be more excited about our tools and equipment than we are about knowing God and becoming fruitful and Christlike. We must not be like the disciples that were more excited about the demons being subject to them, in Jesus name, than they were about having their names written in heaven.

I am more excited about having God's divine nature flowing through me than I am about seeing a leg grow back. We must be more excited about the gift Giver than the gifts.

## Cultivating a desire.

*"Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts..." (1 Cor 14:1a)*

The word desire *"means to burn with zeal, absolutely, to be heated or to boil, to desire earnestly, pursue, to strive after, busy oneself about, to exert oneself that something may not be torn from me."*

It is our responsibility to cultivate a desire for spiritual gifts to be manifested in our lives. Cultivating a desire for spiritual gifts begins by making a decision to desire them. We must make a decision to yield to God as He wills to use us. Make a decision to give your attention to the Word and Spirit of God everyday. If you will do this, you will notice a desire for the gifts of the Spirit growing within you.

Even though the gifts of the Spirit can not be cultivated like a singing gift, a desire for them can be cultivated. We can also cultivate an atmosphere of faith and hunger for God to use us in the gifts.

The gifts of the Spirit won't manifest in our personal lives if we refuse to be used or do not believe God will use us. We will gain knowledge and experience as the Holy Spirit teaches us how to recognize and yield to the gifts.

## The nine gifts of the Spirit.

*"for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills." (1 Cor 12:8-11)*

It is easier to understand these nine gifts of the Spirit when we put them into three categories, with three items in each category.

The 3 categories are:

- 3 of the gifts reveal something.
- 3 gifts do something.
- 3 gifts say something.

The three revelation gifts are:

- The word of wisdom.
- The word of knowledge.
- The discerning of spirits.

The three active or power gifts are:

- The gift of faith.
- The gifts of healings.
- The working of miracles.

The three vocal or utterance gifts are:

- The gift of prophecy.
- Diversity of tongues.
- The interpretation of tongues.

These nine gifts or manifestations of the Holy Spirit are supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit and should be distinguished from their everyday counterparts. For example: a word of wisdom is not the same as wisdom gained by faith through the Word as we see in James 1:5. The word of knowledge is not the same as knowledge that is gained through study. The gift of tongues is not the same as the tongue we use everyday to communicate with.

# Chapter Two

## The Revelation Gifts

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given *the word of wisdom* through the Spirit, to another *the word of knowledge* through the same Spirit, to another **faith** by the same Spirit, to another **gifts of healings** by the same Spirit, to another the **working of miracles**, to another prophecy, to another *discerning of spirits*, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.” (1 Cor 12:7-11)

### The revelation gifts.

Each of the three revelation gifts reveal something different; and each can manifest through a dream, (sleeping vision) an open vision, (when we are awake) by the voice of the Holy Spirit, by a special messenger, (angelic visitation) or by a simple knowing. The revelation gifts can also work independently of each other or they can work together.

We know God has all knowledge, all wisdom and all discernment. We also know it is impossible for us to have all of God's wisdom; to know everything that He knows and to discern everything He discerns. However, God will share a portion of His wisdom, knowledge and discernment through one or more of the revelation gifts.

God not only knows about the beginning and the end; He is the beginning and the end. There is nothing past, present or future that He isn't aware of. There is nothing hidden from His eyes. He knows the thought and intent of every heart.

There are many ways that the revelation gifts can be communicated to others. For example: they can be written down on paper and shared later with one or many people, either in private or in public. They can also be shared verbally in private or in public.

### God will give us revelation of Himself.

When we read our Bibles and seek God, we receive revelation of His written Word and of His person. Jesus was the Word made flesh and Jesus said that the Scriptures testify of Him, for they are written about Him.

The Bible is also God's Covenant to us and the Holy Spirit will reveal the covenant promises to those who seek to know His will. There is an open invitation to come and learn of the Lord and of His ways. The Holy Spirit is always at work teaching us the ways of truth. However, the revelation of His Word and His person serves a different purpose in our lives than do the revelation gifts.

## Using wisdom with the revelation gifts.

If God chooses to reveal something to us through one or more of the revelation gifts, it is important to ask God what we should do with the revelation that He gives us. If God cannot trust us to do the right thing with what He reveals, He will not reveal anything important to us.

For example: God could reveal to us a secret of someone's heart for the purpose of restoration; but if we are unwise in how we use the revelation, it could result in harming the person instead of helping them. If we lack wisdom, God will have to withhold the revelation gifts from us until we learned to use them wisely.

It is very important to let God direct us in how and when something is to be shared. Timing is vital for most revelations. Missing the timing or delivering a message in the wrong way, to the wrong person, will generally cause more harm than good. It is important to be sensitive and obedient to the Holy Spirit's prompting and instruction for sharing the revelation He gives. Very often the revelation is given so that prayer can go up to God and it was never meant to be shared with others.

We must understand that the number of people we are able to help is also the same number that we are able to hurt. Maturity and wisdom is essential if we expect God to use us in the gifts of the Spirit.

## Heavenly and earthly wisdom.

“Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” (James 3:13-18)

There are two types of wisdom, one is from above and the other is from the earth. The wisdom from above is from God and is pure, peaceable and full of good fruit. The wisdom from the earth is sensual and demonic.

The word of wisdom has a different application or purpose than the daily wisdom God gives to every believer for living a successful and purposeful life. The Scripture says, *"But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God..."* (1 Cor 1:30) Jesus made it possible for every believer to have access to God's wisdom everyday.

Daily wisdom must be sought after and is received through faith. *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind."* (James 1:5-6)

## The word of wisdom.

We will understand the word of wisdom better if we have a working definition of wisdom. Wisdom gives us clear vision so that we can recognize and understand the times and seasons of life. Wisdom shows us how to skillfully handle the situations in life successfully. Wisdom lets us know what to do, when to do it and why. Wisdom deals with God's plans and purposes for our lives, both present and future.

Some teach that the word of wisdom is supernatural wisdom given to assist us in making wise decisions [the mind of Christ]. Others teach the word of wisdom is a supernatural revelation of God's divine plans and purposes which pertain to future events. There is truth and value in both view points.

God reveals to us a word of His wisdom for the purpose of helping us make a wise choice concerning the future plans and purposes of God. Through a word of wisdom, God shares a portion of His plan and purpose, to prepare us for upcoming events.

A word of wisdom will show us how to make course corrections so we can be prepared for what lies ahead. A word of wisdom if heeded will lead us into a blessing or out of a snare that is lying in wait for us.

A good example of the word of wisdom can be found in 2 Kings chapter 20. Isaiah gave King Hezekiah the Word of the Lord concerning his future. The Word of the Lord was a word of wisdom that gave the king revelation of his present situation leading to future events. King Hezekiah heeded the revelation and repented before the Lord with tears. As Isaiah was leaving the king, he wasn't able to even reach the middle court before the Lord spoke another word for him to give to Hezekiah. Because the king heeded the word of the Lord, the Lord gave him 15 more years of life, delivered his enemy into his hand and gave him the answer to his sickness. Wisdom will always steer us away from trouble, when we listen.

## Different kinds of knowledge.

Just like there are different types and applications of wisdom, there are also different types and applications of knowledge.

There is worldly or natural knowledge; such as knowing how to fix a car, or, bake a cake. Also, there is the knowledge of good and evil.

Natural knowledge and the knowledge of evil are temporal, fact based, and will mostly become obsolete or will pass away in the ages to come. Most all natural knowledge can be gained through life's experiences and through study.

Jesus said, "*Your word is truth.*" The knowledge of the truth of the Word, is gained through revelation by the Holy Spirit. It is eternal, and will never become obsolete and it will never pass away. God seeks to reveal the knowledge of His covenant to us everyday.

## Word of knowledge.

God is all knowing; and through the word of knowledge, He shares with us a small portion of His total knowledge with us. The word of knowledge is not a general revelation of God's Word, it is a revelation given to us of some fact that God wants to share with us. The word of knowledge is a supernatural transfer to us of something God

knows, either past or present. The word of knowledge deals with people, places, circumstances and things.

Quite often, the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom work together. The word of knowledge is given to reveal a past or present fact, then the word of wisdom is given to direct us on what action we are to take to prepare us for what is to come.

A good example of the word of knowledge is when Jesus was talking to the woman at the well in John chapter 4. Through the word of knowledge, He knew about her past and present marriage situation. Jesus didn't have all knowledge about women, nor did He know everything about this one woman, but He had knowledge about some of her past and present circumstances. The word of knowledge captured the woman's attention and caused her to listen to what He had to say. Jesus used the occasion to share about the living water and to reveal to the woman that He was the Messiah. After Jesus spoke to the woman, she went out and told others to, "*Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did.*"

## Discerning.

As God gives us daily wisdom and knowledge, He also gives us daily discernment. The daily wisdom, knowledge and discernment that God gives us can be increased and cultivated through prayer, faith, study and by living our lives to please God. As we grow and learn how to walk in the Spirit, we will begin to sense things spiritually.

A good example of what daily discernment is like, is a mother's intuition. Because of a woman's sensitive make up, she generally tends to have more everyday discernment than a man.

Some of the ways we all can sharpen daily discernment is through praying in the Spirit (tongues), meditation in the Word, fasting, praise and worship, and time spent ministering to and waiting on the Lord. As we live a lifestyle of obedience and holiness, we will align ourselves with God's will and we will notice our sensitivity to the spirit world increasing.

The greatest hindrance to daily discernment is carnality and busyness. When we spend most of our time thinking about and doing natural things, our level of sensitivity drops. Our souls (mind, will and emotions) become very strong and our spirit man weak. When our spirit man is strengthened by spending time with God and in His Word, our flesh man will become weaker and our discernment will be stronger.

## Discerning of spirits.

Through the gift of discerning of spirits, we can supernaturally discern all spirits; divine, angelic, demonic, or human and can discern the very thought and intent of the heart.

The gift of discerning of spirits offers us a look into another dimension, the spirit dimension. With the gift of discerning of spirits, we receive revelation from the Holy Spirit and it will cause us to perceive the things that live in the spirit world. The purpose of this gift is not to make facts known or give us wisdom, it reveals the activity of the spirit world.

The Lord will use this gift, at times, to expose demonic activity so that we will know how to take action against the demons. Although that is only one use of this gift. This

gift is not limited to discerning only evil spirits. It will also make us aware of angelic activity and can even reveal the thought and intent of someone's heart.

If you have an open vision and see Jesus, an angel, or a demon, it will be through the gift of discerning of spirits. There are many examples of people seeing into the spirit realm in both the Old and New Testament. A small list of examples would be: Stephen seeing Jesus at the right hand of God; Mary seeing the angel that brought the good news; Paul on the road to Damascus; and Moses in the cleft of the rock. Each received a revelation of what was taking place in the spirit world.

Anytime an angel brings a message from God, the message is either the word of knowledge or the word of wisdom or both. Seeing the messenger would be the gift of discerning of spirits. Remember the knowledge or wisdom is what is important, not seeing the messenger.

The gift of discerning of spirits can reveal to us what is going on in the spirit world, without seeing a vision. I have personally never seen into the spirit world, but I have experienced the gift of discerning of spirits many times.

The gift of discerning of spirits is extremely useful in deliverance ministry. When the gift of faith is joined with the gift of discerning of spirits, it is a very effective combination in destroying the works of the devil.

## Final thoughts on the revelation gifts.

Anything and everything that is contained within the realm of knowledge, wisdom, facts, purpose, destiny, past, present, future, divine, demonic, angelic, human, natural, supernatural, events, motives, discernment, or intent is covered by one or more of the revelation gifts. Each and every one of the gifts of revelation are a product of all that God knows, understands, and sees. Therefore, there is no limit to what can and will be revealed through these gifts.

These gifts are unlimited in what they are able to reveal but they don't change things like the power gifts do, nor do they bring a spoken message as do the utterance gifts. Their sole purpose is to bring revelation.

# Chapter Three

## The Power Gifts

The power gifts actively bring change to people, places and things, both in the natural and in the spiritual realm. The power gifts are truly mountain moving gifts.

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another *faith* by the same Spirit, to another *gifts of healings* by the same Spirit, to another the *working of miracles*, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.” (1 Cor 12:7-11)

### Faith.

We have talked previously about how God gives wisdom, knowledge and discernment to help us live our daily lives and how He also gives us faith for everyday life.

Romans 12:3 tells us “...*God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*” This measure of faith can be activated and increased by hearing the Word of God and doing what the Word says. “*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” (Rom 10:17)

The book of Hebrews says that Jesus is the author and finisher [developer] of our faith. The Amplified Bible puts it like this, “...*Who is the Leader and the Source of our faith [giving the first incentive for our belief] and is also its Finisher [bringing it to maturity and perfection].*” (Heb 12:2)

We also know from the scripture that, “*without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*” (Heb 11:6). God would be unjust if He didn't give us the needed faith to please Him.

God wants us to have faith so we will believe His Word. This is the Abraham kind of faith. Abraham believed what was spoken, and it was counted as righteousness to him. We are to follow Abraham's example of believing the Word and the promises of God.

### The gift of faith.

The gift of faith, or as the Amplified Bible describes it, “*wonder-working*” faith is in addition to the faith we are to live by everyday. It is not a different faith. It is just more of the same kind of faith that we live by everyday. The gift of faith is God sharing a

portion of His unwavering, unlimited faith with us as He wills; for a season of time to accomplish a specific task.

The gift of faith is spontaneous to us but not to the Holy Spirit. The gift of faith is given to us without cultivation or human labor, and is indigenous to the Holy Spirit. God has given us access to faith through the Word as we have previously said, but God reserves the right, as He wills, to take us for a season of time to a higher level of faith than what we would normally live in everyday.

I remember one time in particular while attending an intercessory prayer meeting that suddenly, without warning, the gift of faith manifested in me. God instructed me to be cautious and then proceeded to tell me that everything I was about to speak or ask Him for would come to pass while the gift of faith was upon me. My first reaction was a fearful reverence of the awesome responsibility God had handed to me. So I spoke and asked for those things I felt in my heart would please the Lord and bring glory to Him.

Soon the gift of faith lifted from me and as best I could, I wrote down everything I had spoken and asked God to do. Needless to say, every single thing I prayed for came to pass just as I prayed it. Some items happened very quickly and others over the period of a few years but each came to pass without exception.

The Scripture gives many examples of how God speaks His Word to change things. The gift of faith will move mountains: some will move fast and some slow but they will move. The gift of faith sets things in motion and keeps working until the will of God is fulfilled.

Very often God will instruct us to speak to the mountain while this gift is manifesting. So don't be fearful of speaking to impossible looking mountains when the gift of faith is at work.

God brings change to our lives by speaking His Word to us, but we must believe the Word He speaks. If the Word God gives to us is bigger than we are able to believe for, He will give us the additional faith we need to believe His Word. Without God's Word and without faith in His Word, there will be no change in our lives. Take time and read Hebrews chapter 11 and see what faith can do.

We could call lots of things miracles, like the way a tadpole turns into a frog, or how a caterpillar turns into a butterfly, or how a seed turns into a plant, or how the planets stay in orbit of the sun. God makes all of life work so miraculously. But these everyday miracles of life are different than the gift of the working of miracles.

## Working of miracles.

We should define a miracle as a supernatural intervention in the ordinary course of nature. A miracle is an overriding, temporary suspension or intervention of natural laws and progressions. For example: a missing arm that grew back would be a miracle: also getting water out of a rock; splitting the Red Sea; an ax head floating; feeding five thousand people from a little boy's lunch; or turning water into wine, are all miracles.

Opening the eyes of the blind would seem like a miracle but it would be considered a healing. A missing eye being replaced would be considered a miracle. There are more examples of this gift in the Old Testament than in the New Testament. Except for Jesus, Moses' ministry displayed more miracles than any other man. There were plenty of examples of miracles in the lives of the prophets during the Old Testament.

Of necessity, God had to reveal Himself and His will through supernatural signs during the Old Testament dispensation. Remember, Jesus came at the end of the Old Testament and He also ministered as an Old Testament prophet. The New Covenant was not ratified until after Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.

## Healing.

God has put within each of us a natural healing process. If we will obey the laws of God and be a faithful steward over our physical body, many sicknesses would be avoided before they could get started. We have a responsibility to watch over our bodies, which are the temples of the Holy Spirit.

Here is a partial list of spiritual causes for sickness: fear, anxiety, worry, stress, hatred, bitterness, unforgiveness, grief, and living without hope or purpose. Even science has documented many of these as being directly responsible for physical sickness and disease. If we will drive out these negative spiritual enemies and replace them with the fruit of the Spirit, "*love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance*" we would be amazed how it would help our bodies to stay healthy.

There are many examples of Jesus ministering to people's health issues by casting out evil spirits; such as spirits of infirmity, deaf and dumb spirits, and unclean spirits.

Demons not only attack our flesh but they can also attack our mind, will, and emotions [soul]. We must not allow negative thinking and negative emotions to persist for long periods of time. Weak wills, minds and emotions are an open invitation to demons. Our mind, will and emotions must be kept strong and healthy.

Here is a partial list of natural things that can and will cause physical problems if taken to the extreme: bad eating habits, lack of exercise, substance abuse, and improper rest. If we give our body what it needs to be healthy, many problems can be avoided. We must take account of our lives in order to establish and maintain good health.

Proverbs chapter four tells us that the Word of God is medicine and healing to our flesh. The Word also says a merry heart does good like a medicine.

Healing can also be received by believing the Word of God in faith. The Word says that God sent His Word to heal us and the prayer of faith shall save the sick.

## The gifts of healings.

The gifts of healing are a supernatural manifestation of God's healing power. The gifts of healings have little to do with our believing the written Word of God in faith. The gifts of healing are a spontaneous manifestation of the healing power of God as the Spirit wills.

I personally experienced a manifestation of this gift before I was saved. God used it to get my attention and lead me to salvation. I had no knowledge of the redemptive work of the cross which provides healing to all those who believe and live for the Savior.

I have also experienced this gift on a couple of other occasions after I was saved. Each of these times, the gift manifested through me for someone else. I can only share my personal experiences with this gift. Your experiences may be very different. Each time the Spirit manifested the gifts of healing through me, He placed an anointing in my

arms and hands. My only instruction at the time the gift was manifesting was to place my hands on the sick person and transfer the anointing into them.

In my personal experience, the manifestation of the gifts of healing was very different from the gift of faith that I explained earlier. While the gift of faith was manifesting, God's faith consumed me. When the gifts of healing manifested, I was not aware of faith at all; the only thing I was focused on was how I needed to transfer the anointing that was on me into the sick person.

There are so many different ways the gifts of healing can manifest in the body of Christ that it would be impossible to cover them all. Realize that God seeks to give these gifts of healing to people and for them to be willing to let Him use them to share these gifts as He wills.

# Chapter Four

## The Utterance Gifts

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another *prophecy*, to another discerning of spirits, to another *different kinds of tongues*, to another *the interpretation of tongues*.”  
(1 Cor 12:7-11)

### The three utterance gifts.

The three utterance gifts are prophecy, different kinds of tongues and interpretation of tongues.

Two of the three utterance gifts, tongues and interpretation of tongues, are unique to the New Testament.

The utterance gifts are a vocal manifestation or expression of the Spirit. They are a vocal miracle.

Everyday we use our voice to express ourselves but through these three utterance gifts, the Holy Spirit will express Himself.

The Holy Spirit will speak to us and through us in many different ways, but the utterance gifts are a unique form of the Spirit's expression.

### The Word and Spirit of prophecy.

The Bible has much to say about prophecy and defines it in many different ways. 1 Corinthians 12 is talking about the gift of prophecy. We will see more about how the Word of God defines this gift a little later.

The scripture says "*...For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*" (Rev 19:10) What is the testimony of Jesus? Let's let Jesus answer this question Himself. Jesus said, "*you search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.*" (John 5:39) The Scriptures are the testimony of Jesus.

2 Peter 1:19-21 says, "*and so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*" God's Word is the prophetic Word, the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, the Scriptures testify of Jesus because they are written of Him. We also know,

*"the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)*

## Prophecy in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, prophesying was reserved primarily for the prophets, kings and priests. In Numbers 11:24-25, the LORD came down in a cloud and spoke to Moses, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it to the seventy elders. When the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. We find this common phrase throughout the Scriptures, *"and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied."*

In 1 Samuel 19:20 *"Saul sent messengers to take David. And when they saw the group of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as leader over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied."* Saul sent three groups of messengers who prophesied likewise. There were some exceptions where prophecy fell on people that were not prophets, priests or kings but it was the exception not the rule.

On the day of Pentecost, as the Spirit was being poured out, Peter stood up and addressed all that were standing by and he quotes Joel 2:28. *"But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: and it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy."* (Acts 2:16-18) From that day until now the Spirit is being poured out on all flesh and we all shall prophesy.

When one is anointed or inspired by the Spirit to preach, it has a prophetic flavor because it is being influenced by God for that moment. Prophetic preaching, teaching and even prayer is inspired by the moment and is not studied or planned. There is a vast difference between being emotionally enthusiastic (which proceeds from the soul of man) and being inspired by the prophetic anointing.

## Gift of prophecy.

Among the three utterance gifts, prophecy is the greatest and should be the most sought after, especially during our church gatherings. The reason is simple. The gift of different kinds of tongues, without interpretation, will not edify the body and the gift of interpretation of tongues cannot exist without the gift of different kinds of tongues.

1 Corinthians 14:5 says, *"... for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification."*

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:1 to *"Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy."* This verse suggests that there is great value associated with the gift of prophecy and we should desire it.

The purpose and intended use for the gift of prophecy is found in 1 Corinthians 14:3, *"But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men."* The gift of prophecy will edify, exhort, and comfort the church. We can judge whether or not it is the gift of prophecy manifesting by whether or not the church is being edified, exhorted and comforted.

Romans 12:6 gives us more insight concerning prophecy. It says, *"having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith."*

Although the gift of prophecy is a gift of the Spirit, it still requires faith to prophesy. When the gift of prophesy begins to manifest in us, we don't know what we are going to say until we open our mouths to speak. In other words, as we are prophesying, we are often hearing the words for the first time, just as the receivers are. Prophecy is as the Spirit wills and is not something we study or rehearse. One reason faith is needed to prophesy, is because we must trust God to fill our mouths with words.

Prophecy is a spontaneous, God given inspiration that comes from the heart of God and is spoken through us. The gift will flow more fully through us when we learn to keep our mind from interfering. To prophesy we must learn to be fully yielded to the Spirit of God in faith.

## Different kinds of tongues.

This gift is greatly misunderstood by most people. The Scripture says, *"Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers."* (1 Cor 14:22). Tongues should never be hid from unbelievers. Tongues have been given by God for a sign.

If our experience with God is one of logic and reason, we will have a hard time understanding tongues because tongues are spiritual and have nothing to do with logic or reason. Tongues are a spiritual matter, not a mental one. It is just as impossible to understand tongues with reason and logic as it is to see with your nose or hear with your eye.

I believe that one reason tongues draws such controversy is that they force people to take a close look at their own spirituality. They are forced to make a choice to either accept or reject tongues as part of living a deeper spiritual life in God. Tongues are a stumbling block unless you are hungry and thirsty for more of God. Tongues began on the day of Pentecost and will continue throughout the church age. It is a fact that the baptism of the Spirit, with the evidence of speaking in tongues, does bring us into a deeper place with God.

## Six basic uses for tongues.

The first use of tongues that I would like to talk about is the gift of tongues. The gift of tongues is one of the nine gifts of the Spirit and differs from other types of tongues. Any time this gift is manifesting, it must be interpreted. This rule of interpretation does not apply to all forms of tongues.

The manifestation of this utterance gift when coupled with the gift of interpretation has much the same effect as does the gift of prophecy, which is to edify, exhort and comfort the church. The gift of tongues (one of the nine gifts of the Spirit) is as the Spirit wills, not as we will. People that have never spoken in tongues themselves generally can't understand that there is more than one type of tongues. There are 5 other applications of tongues that have been given to the church. These other 5 types of tongues do not need to be interpreted.

Paul, speaking about the gift of tongues said, *"If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God."* (1 Cor 14:27-28) The rules Paul gives here are to be applied to the gift of tongues only. We know this because he said let one interpret. Interpretation is also one of the nine gifts of the Spirit. These two gifts, tongues and the interpretation of tongues must work together. However, what Paul said

in 1 Corinthians 14:27-28 does not apply to praying and singing in tongues, nor does it apply to the baptism of the Holy Spirit with evidence of speaking in tongues.

Praying and singing in tongues, and the baptism of the Spirit with evidence of speaking in tongues differ from giving a message in tongues. Paul said, "*if there is no interpreter let him keep silent in the church.*" Paul didn't say, don't speak in tongues at all because he said, "*let him speak to himself and to God.*" What Paul was saying is, don't give a message in tongues to the whole church unless someone can interpret it to the whole church. If there is no one to interpret than speak in tongues to yourself and to God, not the entire church. Some people take this verse and say, "*if there is no interpreter then all forms of tongues are unacceptable in church.*" Nothing could be further from the truth.

The second use of tongues, found throughout the book of Acts, is the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:4; Acts 10:44-46; Acts 11:15-17; Acts 19:6) This tongue is different than the gift of tongues listed as one of the nine gifts of the Spirit and does not need to be interpreted. They are given as evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. After many years of observation and study of the Scripture I am fully persuaded that the only trustworthy evidence we can depend upon that proves someone has been baptized in the Holy Spirit, is speaking in tongues. Don't fall into the misconception that you can be baptized in the Holy Spirit without the Biblical evidence of speaking in tongues. To believe someone can be baptized in the Holy Spirit without the evidence of speaking in tongues is unsound doctrine and opens the door to confusion with many assumptions and misconceptions.

The third use of tongues is for personal edification. (1 Cor 14:4) To edify means to build up. Is there any benefit to being built up spiritually? Time spent praying with our spirit man, (in other tongues) will edify or charge our spiritual battery. There is great benefit in this type of speaking in tongues. This kind of tongues can be done anywhere at any time.

The fourth use of tongues is to assist us in intercessory prayer. This kind of tongues often goes into groanings. (Rom 8:26-27) During intercessory prayer, we find that we don't know how to pray as we ought and the Holy Spirit will give us words to pray that are too deep to be spoken in any other way but through groanings.

Every believer can and should have an intercessory prayer language. It has been my observation that a believer generally receives his or her prayer language at the time of the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. If we are unable to pray in tongues the effectiveness of our prayer lives will be greatly diminished.

The fifth use of tongues is to war against evil spirits in prayer. These kinds of prayer tongues are for the pulling down of enemy strongholds. There are times when the spiritual air becomes so polluted with resistance to the move of God that the Spirit of God will come along side and bring a decisive, quick victory to the situation by speaking some heavenly words through us in an unknown tongue. It is not unknown to God, it is only unknown to our minds. Often this application of tongues will arise during times of ministry and laying on of hands, or when interceding for breakthrough. When our intercessory prayer in other tongues takes on an aggressive tone, we know that we never talk to God in that way, therefore we know that these aggressive forms of speaking in tongues is directed against the devil and his strongholds that bind God's people.

The sixth use of tongues is for praise, worship and singing. We praise, worship and sing spiritual songs to God in a heavenly tongue. Tongues are a heavenly language not an earthly one. The Scripture says, "*For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my*

*understanding is unfruitful. What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding." (1 Cor 14:14-15)* Our prayer, praise and singing to God doesn't need interpretation. God knows what we are saying. These kinds of tongues are not for people, they are for God.

Paul said, "I will" pray and "I will" sing with my understanding and with my spirit. Singing and praying with our spirit is singing and praying in tongues. We know that the gift of tongues requires interpretation and is as the Spirit of God wills, not as we will. But Paul said, "I will" pray and "I will" sing with my spirit (in tongues). It is clear that praying and singing in tongues is different from the gift of tongues because, according to Paul, we can sing and pray in tongues at will. It is not Scriptural to mix all types of tongues together and try to judge them by one set of rules.

The Scripture says, "*God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*" (John 4:24) What better way to worship; sing and pray to God, who is a Spirit, by praying and singing to God in tongues by our spirits? "*For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.*" (1 Cor 14:2) Do you think it would be OK with God to speak to God in His tongue instead of our tongue? Yes, of course it is.

## Final thoughts on tongues.

It is Biblical to worship, praise and pray in tongues, as well as give a message in tongues during our church gatherings. It is only the pride and fear of man that keeps man bound to his own limited intellect. Tongues are spiritual and will never be acceptable to man's intellect.

I have seen a distinct increase in the spiritual depth of every person I have observed since 1976 after having been baptized in the Holy Spirit with evidence of speaking in tongues. However, I have noticed an even greater increase of spiritual depth in those that make praying, praising and worshipping God in tongues an integral part of their Christian life.

Tongues are for every believer without exception! But not every believer will experience the gift of tongues and give a public utterance for the purpose of interpretation. However, every believer can be edified, pray and sing in other tongues at home and in church.

Again, I believe we can experience some depths of God's Spirit without speaking in tongues; but the richness and fullness that awaits us can only be experienced after the fullness of the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

## Interpretation of tongues.

Paul said, in 1 Corinthians 14:4-5, "*I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.*" The Scripture teaches that the gift of prophecy is greater than the gift of tongues unless the tongues are interpreted. The statement Paul made would seem to imply that when tongues and the interpretation of tongues are working together, they serve to accomplish the same purpose as the gift of prophecy.

Paul is talking about the 3 utterance gifts and how to use them to edify the church. The church as a whole will not be edified if someone gives a message in tongues and it is not interpreted. If the church is to be edified, it is better to have the gift of prophecy than the gift of tongues because, "*He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.*" (1 Cor 14:4) Paul didn't say don't speak in tongues at all. He didn't say it is wrong to have personal edification. Paul is simply teaching the difference between the gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy and how they should be used during our gatherings.

Interpretation of tongues might be considered the least of all the gifts because it is the only gift that is dependent upon another gift before it can function. Without tongues this gift could not exist.

People often ask why a message in tongues and its interpretation are sometimes different lengths. There are a couple of reasons for this. The main reason would be that interpretation of tongues is not a word for word translation, it is an interpretation. The interpretation of what was said in the Spirit may or may not be the same length in a known language. One heaven sent word may or may not need several known words to express fully what was said.

Secondly, the interpretation may be longer because at the end of it the person giving the interpretation may go directly into the gift of prophecy. The anointing of both gifts is very similar and the congregation may not be able to tell when one gift ended and when the other began.

If God uses you to bring a message in tongues, 1 Corinthians 14:13 instructs us to ask Him for the interpretation. Whether or not God chooses to use us to interpret remains His choice; but we are to ask and to desire to be used to give the interpretation.

Tongues and the interpretation of tongues accomplish basically the same purpose as prophecy; therefore, we should judge the interpretation with the same criteria as we judge prophecy. 1 Corinthians 14:3 says, "*But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.*" For that reason, the interpretation must pass the same test as prophecy.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:26 "*How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.*" Whatever gift is being used, let all things be done for edification.

# Chapter Five

## Final Thoughts

As believers, it is very important to build our lives on the Word and not on the gifts. God wants us to learn to receive our daily bread of provision directly from the Word of Life, whether it is healing, faith, discernment, wisdom, knowledge or a miracle.

Spiritual things tend to frighten some people and intrigue others more than it should. The Scripture says, "*God is a Spirit*" so if we are going to have any real encounters with God, we must strive to understand the spirit world. The spirit world is not a safe place to venture without the written Word of God and the Holy Spirit.

Anytime we experience spiritual manifestations, they must be judged. The Lord has provided, in the Word, guidelines and safeguards for us to follow. People get into trouble by not knowing or not following what the written Word of God says about spiritual matters.

As believers, we must not depend on any of the gifts of the Spirit to see us through in life. We are to depend on the written Word and faith in that Word. If we need a miracle or healing for any reason, we must first go to the redemptive work of the cross. We look to the New Covenant that is established on better promises.

The cross is a place of provision for the child of God. Our faith in the blood of Jesus and in the unwavering, unchanging Word of God are the only things we base our lives on. As the Spirit wills, we will see a greater manifestation of His power and provision.

We are supposed to desire the best gifts. So which gift are we to consider as the best? In an everyday practical sense, the best gift would be the one that is needed most at the time. To the person that is sick unto death, the best gift would be the gift of healing. If you were in need of wisdom for your life, then the word of wisdom would be the best gift. Prophecy would be the most beneficial if you were in need of edification, exhortation and comfort.

Paul instructed us to desire prophecy above all. Make a conscious effort to cultivate a desire to be used to prophesy, then leave it up to God to decide whether or not to use you in prophecy. He may choose to use you in one or more of the other gifts instead, but regardless, we are to desire to prophesy.

We don't have to look long to find people in the church that are self promoting. They are quick to inform anyone that will listen to them that they have some great revelation from God. In reality, it is nothing more than a fleshly, self promoting, manipulating spirit. A true manifestation of the Spirit will glorify Jesus, not people.

All the gifts of the Spirit must be judged according to the Word and by the Spirit, but the utterance and revelation gifts must be judged very closely because it is a tempting target for spirits that seek to deceive.

As we begin to judge the manifestation of the gifts, it is wise to start by inspecting the fruit of the person that is being used in the gifts. The manifestation must be judged in the Spirit, according to the Word of God and by the church's leadership. It is always wise whenever possible to inspect the fruit of the person, or person's involved. It is always wise to be a fruit inspector in all things.

We know there is a counterfeit for everything in the kingdom that is true and right. This should be no surprise because one of the devil's strategies is to distort truth in any way he can. So don't throw out the baby with the bath water just because there is some misuse of the gifts of the Spirit.

## A word to the wise.

There are those who have been shipwrecked because of the misuse of the gifts or manifestations of the Spirit. Both ministers and believers have become casualties of fraud and deception. Ministers are often tempted to force the manifestation of these gifts because large crowds of people will gather in meetings where the gifts are working. Believers have fallen prey to deception because they are always wanting someone to give them a Word from the Lord instead of being led by the Spirit themselves.

It is good to be where the gifts are active, but nowhere in the Word of God does it tell us to be led by the gifts or by signs and wonders. The child of God is to be led by the Spirit of God through the inner witness. People that insist on being led by the gifts will eventually be deceived and led astray.

The essence of our service while on this earth is to bring glory to God and to edify others. Following these simple guidelines will go a long way toward keeping us on track. Gifts are exciting and something to be desired, but they should never replace our relationship with God.

True ministry is the ministry of the Spirit. True ministry goes beyond speaking words of encouragement or simple expression of doctrine. True ministry is learning to let the ministry of Jesus flow through us. Jesus' ministry was one of wisdom and of demonstration of the Spirit and power. Every aspect of Jesus' ministry was a demonstration of oneness of thought, purpose and obedience to the Father's will. Let this be the pattern of our lives, not the pursuit of gifts and manifestations. A life of maturity and obedience is of greater value than image and charisma. Live a life of surrendered obedience to the Father and the gifts will come.

Fruit is of more lasting value than gifts. Gifts are given, but fruit is grown. The evidence of our abiding is in the fruit we bear, not the gifts we have.

Seek God more than the gifts and the gifts will come to you as the Spirit wills.