

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

When we receive the gift of God's Holy Spirit, we enter a new life of discipleship to our Blessed Lord.

By our commitment to him, we have opened the door to a new and beautiful house. But now that the door is opened we are to go in, explore the house, rest in it, use it, enjoy it. As we do this, we shall discover new spiritual gifts, a new way of love and the fruit of the Spirit.

When we enter into the life of the Spirit, we discover certain gifts or manifestations of the Spirit. These are the Spirit's supernatural tools or equipment of Christian service. All are specific and apply to individual situations. Their use is always for a particular time and place and circumstance. Any Spirit-filled Christian can manifest any of these gifts as the Spirit directs. The Spirit gives them "to every man to profit withal." (*a more accurate translation is: "The Holy Spirit displays God's power through each one of us as a means of helping the entire Church."* *Living Bible 1 Cor. 12:7*).

St. Paul lists in 1 Cor. 12: 8-10 nine gifts or manifestations of the Spirit. We will use this list below. But there are other texts worth mentioning where gifts of the Spirit are listed: 1 Cor. 12: 28-30; Acts 11:27; and 1 Peter 4:10 "Put yourselves at the service of others: if you are a speaker...if you are a helper... that in everything God may receive the glory..."

- 1) The WORD OF WISDOM is a supernaturally given revelation of God's direction and guidance for a specific situation. It tells us what God wants us to do.
- 2) The WORD OF KNOWLEDGE IS A REVELATION OF A PIECE OF INFORMATION WHICH CANNOT BE KNOWN IN A NATURAL WAY. It is God's diagnosis of a problem, a sickness, or another situation.
- 3) The GIFT OF FAITH is an instantaneous complete assurance of God's willingness and ability to act in a given situation. The absence of doubt which the gift brings is an essential accompaniment of the gifts of healing and working of miracles.
- 4) GIFTS OF HEALING ARE SPECIAL ANOINTINGS OF THE Holy Spirit which enable us to bring God's healing power to those who are sick.
- 5) The WORKING OF MIRACLES is a special momentary gift of authority which enables us to perform miracles in the name of Jesus Christ.
- 6) DISCERNING OF SPIRITS is an ability to recognize evil spirits in people or places. We must recognize or discern demons in this way before we can cast them out.

- 7) The GIFT OF PROPHECY is an anointing of the Holy Spirit to speak the words of God. It is always for our direction, upbuilding and encouragement. Sometimes it may be predicting future events, if God wants us to know them.
- 8) The GIFT OF TONGUES:
 - a) The prayer language: The new language which the Spirit can give us and which we need to seek is a sign of God's continuing presence. Through the gift of tongues, a Spirit-filled Christian can pray without ceasing in the Spirit and have this constant witness within himself to the reality of the Holy Spirit and of His testimony to the Living Christ. For this reason, the person will experience a new peace and joy in knowing the near presence of the Lord.
 - b) Tongues as a message to be interpreted: this is a supernatural means of God's communication with His people. It is a message given in a language unknown to the speaker and is always in conjunction with the Gift of Interpretation.
- 9) The GIFT OF INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES gives back in the vernacular the sense of what was said in the gift of tongues. The two gifts operating together are equivalent to prophecy.

The exercise of any of these gifts requires co-operation between us and the Holy Spirit. He gives the gifts as He wills. He lets people know in a variety of ways when they are to exercise one of them. For the spoken gifts He will sometimes put in our mind the first few words. In the case of healing often the hands begin to feel anointed. Or, He may simply put in our mind the idea that we are about to exercise one of the gifts. Our part in this is obedience. He will not operate us like puppets. To exercise the spoken gifts, we must open our mouths and speak out the words He gives us. To heal, work miracles, or cast out demons we must be willing to lay on hands, speak a word of command, or do anything else He might direct us to do. It is generally best not to be too insistent on telling Him when and where we are willing to do these things. His judgement about these things is better than ours.