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## SESSION 3 | Spiritual Gifts: How Does the Spirit Work Today?

### **INTRODUCTION**

As followers of Jesus Christ, born again from above and indwelt with the Holy Spirit, our lives should be characterized by regular experiences of God's manifest presence and power. It is his work in us that brings about transformation, and his activity through us that brings about exaltation and edification. We have the joy of receiving God's grace, and then in turn exercising our gifts to display his love in service to others! The Scriptures are clear.

We are to ***“Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts.”*** (1 Cor. 14:1)

***Exodus 33: 15*** Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. ***16*** How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"

**A distinctive of the people of God is the active presence of God displayed in love, service, purity, and power.**

### **I. OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT**

- A. THE BROAD WORK of the HOLY SPIRIT, beginning with the most powerful and glorious of all mighty works – regeneration/salvation (including illumination, sanctification, transformation, guidance, impartation, unity, and assurance)!
- B. BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT – Eph. 5:18-19
- C. BE IN FELLOWSHIP WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT – 2 Cor. 13:14
- D. BE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT – Rom. 8:13-14
- E. BE WITNESSES BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT – Acts 1:8
- F. PURSUE LOVE, AND EARNESTLY DESIRE THE GIFTS of the SPIRIT – 1 Cor. 14:1

### **II. THE PURPOSE AND PRIORITY OF THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

- A. THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFTS  
Spiritual Gift - "Any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church" – Wayne Grudem

***1 Corinthians 12:4*** Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ***5*** and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ***6*** and there are

*varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

We must be clear and convinced from Scripture about the vital purpose of spiritual gifts in the lives of people individually, and in the church corporately. It is that conviction that will inspire us to faith, obedience, and consistency in exercising the gifts; and it is that conviction that will provoke others to love and good works.

1. Given that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ - 1 Pet. 4:11
2. To be exercised as expression of love - 1 Cor. 14:1
3. Given for the common good - 1 Cor. 12:7
4. Given to serve others - 1 Pet. 4:10
5. Exercised to edify the church - 1 Cor. 14:12
6. Can evangelize the unbelieving - 1 Cor. 14:24

#### B. THE PRIORITY OF THE GIFTS

Because the gifts are a priority in Scripture, they must be a priority in the church. We must be growing in new and fresh experiences in the Holy Spirit.

1. We are not to be ignorant - 1 Cor. 12:1
2. To be earnestly desired - 1 Cor. 14:1,12
3. Given to each one - 1 Cor. 12:7
4. Given by the Holy Spirit (therefore all gifts are "supernatural") - 1 Cor. 12:10
5. Given as he wills - 1 Cor. 12:11
6. The church is built up as each part does its work - Eph. 4:16
7. Are to be expected and exercised whenever you come together! - 1 Cor. 14:26
8. Are to be stirred, kindled, and fanned into flame! – 2 Tim. 1:6

#### III. THE PRACTICE OF THE GIFTS

- We must be convinced from Scripture, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 14:1).
- We must pray and ask, and ask in faith (Luke 11:9-13).

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- We must have a heart to love and serve (1 Cor. 14:1).
  - We must learn to discern and respond to the prompting of the Spirit and to his activity in the lives of others. This begins, not amid the activity of meetings, but in times of solitude. By pursuing the spiritual disciplines in an attitude of humility, adoration and “confident desperation” we learn to distinguish his voice and grow in our confidence that he will give us ears to hear, eyes to see, and specific steps to take.

#### A. HOW DOES GOD SPEAK?

Disciples (sheep) must live a life of listening. Jesus said that we would hear his voice and follow him. We listen, first of all, to hear what the Lord is saying to us personally. We must then be attentive to his voice for things he wants to say through us to others.

1. Scripture
2. Preaching and Teaching
3. Worship
4. Fellowship
5. Reading
6. Meditation
7. Prayer
8. Prophecy and other Gifts of the Spirit
9. Waiting
10. Activity and Daily Life
11. Creation
12. Attentive observation and care for those around you
13. Providence

#### B. HOW WILL I RECEIVE OR GIVE A WORD FROM THE LORD? I.E. WHAT FORM WILL IT TAKE?

We rarely have the luxury of having a complete and detailed message when we begin to pray or minister in the Spirit. That's why they're called steps of faith! We should have the confidence, however, that “...if we ask for a fish, he will not give us a snake instead; and if we, though we are evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more will our father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”  
(Luke 11:11-13)

1. A Scripture verse or passage
2. A Phrase
3. A Word
4. A Statement

5. A Picture or image
6. An Emotion
7. An Action or Activity
8. A Song
9. An Unknown Tongue
10. A Prayer
11. A Name
12. An idea, plan, vision

C. THE GIFT OF PROPHECY/ PROPHETIC MINISTRY

*1 Thessalonians 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise prophecies, 21 but test everything; hold fast what is good.*

1. Purpose
  - a. Edification
  - b. Consolation/ Comfort
  - c. Exhortation
2. The person prophesying
  - a. Character
  - b. Motive
  - c. Relationship
3. The practice of prophetic ministry
  - a. Consistent with Scripture
  - b. Consistent with leadership
  - c. Consistent with prescribed order
  - d. Consistent with measure of gift
4. Personal, directive prophecy (similar gift, different context)
  - a. Prophecy ("words") are not a substitute for:
    - (1) Scripture
    - (2) prayer
    - (3) spiritual authority
    - (4) clearly defined relationships
    - (5) a multitude of godly and mature counsel
  - b. Personal prophecy usually confirms rather than directs or predicts
  - c. Our authority is confined to calling individuals to obey Scripture
  - d. A word involving a specific direction or prediction for an individual's life or future should be submitted to the person's pastor
  - e. Life decisions should never be made on the basis of prophecy alone
  - f. Should be confirmed and tested with those to whom God has joined you

D. MINISTERING TO OTHERS

1. Always be alert to opportunities in everyday life (to edify, comfort, exhort)
  - a. Casual conversation
  - b. Occasions of need
  - c. Home/ household
2. Always be alert in gatherings, events, and activities
  - a. During worship in song
  - b. Calls for prayer and ministry

E. GETTING STARTED AND STEPPING OUT IN THE GIFTS

1. Pursue love
2. Resist Fear
3. Resist pride
4. Expect God to use you (*lean forward!*)
5. Give a brief introduction
6. Present your thought simply as an impression, idea, or feeling
7. Check with someone in leadership if unsure
8. Ask a question
9. Write it down
10. Encourage others
11. Don't limit God
12. Ask for whatever gift the situation requires
13. Be willing to make a mistake
14. Ask for an evaluation
15. Stir the gifts, and look for the next opportunity

## ADDENDUM A – Activity of the Holy Spirit

- Imparts skill and ability - Exodus 31:3
- Anoints to prophesy - Numbers 11:25-29
- Imparts wisdom, understanding, counsel, power, knowledge, and the fear of the Lord – Is. 11:2
- Anoints for prophecy, dreams, and visions - Joel 2:28
- Will speak through us - Matthew 10:20
- Regenerates; means of being born again – John 3:3-8
- Gives life - John 6:63
- Comforts and counsels - John 14:16-18
- Teaches - John 14:26
- Reminds - John 14:26
- Testifies about Jesus - John 15:26
- Convicts and reproves - John 16:8
- Guides into truth - John 16:13
- Glorifies Jesus – John 16:14
- Makes things known of the Lord - John 16:15
- Imparts power - Acts 1:8
- Empowers to speak the Word of God boldly - Acts 4:31
- Was imparted during laying on of hands - Acts 8:17; 19:6
- Comforts - Acts 9:31
- Directs the church - Acts 13:2, 4
- Pours the love of God into our hearts - Romans 5:5
- Controls the mind bringing life and peace - Romans 8:6
- Helps put to death sin – Romans 8:13
- Leads - Romans 8:14
- Testifies that we are God's children - Romans 8:16
- Helps our infirmities, teaches to pray - Romans 8:26
- Ministers hope and peace – Romans 15:13
- Reveals and illumines - 1 Corinthians 2: 6-16
- Dwells within us - 1 Corinthians 6:19
- Imparts gifts - 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Hebrews 2:4
- Brings freedom/ liberty – 2 Corinthians 3:17
- Will fellowship with us – 2 Corinthians 13:14
- Reveals God as “Abba, father” – Galatians 4:6
- Enables to resist the desires of the flesh – Galatians 5:16
- Walks with us – Galatians 5:25
- Brings wisdom and revelation – Ephesians 1:17
- Strengthens with power in our inner man – Ephesians 3:16
- Can be grieved – Ephesians 4:30
- Fills us – Ephesians 5:18
- Enables worship – Philippians 3:3
- Provides joy – I Thessalonians 1:6
- Can be quenched – 1 Thessalonians 5:19
- Sanctifies – 2 Thessalonians 2:13
- Regeneration and renewal – Titus 3:5
- Bears witness to forgiveness of sin – Hebrews 10:15-18
- Sanctifies – I Peter 1:2
- Speaks to churches – Revelation 2:11

## ADDENDUM B - The Gifts Mentioned In 1 Corinthians 12:6-8

**Utterance of Wisdom/ Utterance of Knowledge** – Spirit empowered impartation of truth or revelation (i.e. something revealed, made known) perhaps expressed in teaching, evangelizing, or prophesying.

**Faith** – The divine ability to exhibit extraordinary confidence in God by intervening with God-given authority through prayer and/or action to meet a specific need or challenge.

**Healing** – The divine ability to function as an instrument of God's healing grace to help others receive his healing touch in their lives.

**Miraculous Powers** – The divine ability to perform powerful acts that are perceived by observers to have altered the ordinary course of nature.

**Prophecy** – The divine ability to present a clear message that God has brought to mind which edifies, exhorts, or comforts.

**Distinguishing between Spirits** – Divine ability to hear or read information and determine whether the source is divine, human, or demonic.

**Speaking in Different Kinds of Tongues** – The divine ability to speak in an earthly language not learned and/or in a heavenly language.

**Interpretation of Tongues** – The divine ability to share the meaning of a message given in tongues.

### **Other Gifts Mentioned in Scripture** (Examples, but not necessarily exhaustive)

**Encouragement** – Romans 12:8

**Giving to Others** – Romans 12:8

**Showing Mercy** – Romans 12:8

**Administration** – I Corinthians 12:28

**Healing** – I Corinthians 12:30

**Serving/ Helps**– Romans 12:7; I Peter 4:11

**Teaching** – Romans 12:7

**Leadership** – Romans 12:8

## ADDENDUM C - Waiting on God/ Hearing God's Voice

### A. WE ARE TO WAIT ON GOD...

1. Reverently – Ps. 25:12-14
2. Expectantly (in faith!) – Hebrews 11:6
3. Patiently – Ps. 40:1
4. Humbly – Jn. 15:5; 1 Cor. 4:6-7
5. Quietly – Ps. 46:10-11
6. Watchfully – Prov. 24:30-34
7. Desperately – Gen. 32:26; Ps. 63:1
8. Aggressively – Prov. 2:1-9; Ps. 130:5-6
9. Purposefully – Ps. 63:1-5; Is. 50:4
10. Responsively – Ps. 73:28
11. Consistently – Ps. 16:7-8; 25:4-5

### B. HEARING GOD (God does speak to us, and we can learn to hear his voice)

**Jer. 33:3** 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'

**Matt. 4:4** Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

**Acts 13:2** While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

**3** So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

**Heb. 12:25** See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?

**1 Sam. 3:1-21** The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli. In those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions. **2** One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. **3** The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. **4** Then the LORD called Samuel. Samuel answered, "Here I am." **5** And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down....

**1 Kings 19:11-13** The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. **12** After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. **13** When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

**John 10:27** My sheep hear/ listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

**1 Thess. 5:19** Do not quench the Spirit (put out the Spirit's fire – NIV); **20** Do not despise prophecies (do not treat prophecies with contempt – NIV). **21** Test everything. Hold on to the good.

**Rev. 3:20** Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.