

Spiritual Gifts #3:

1 Corinthians 12:8-10

INTRODUCTION

The Holy Spirit supernaturally empowers believers with spiritual gifts to express God's grace and power in a way that is beyond what the believer is naturally able to do in their own ability.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS LISTED IN 1 COR 12:8-10

1 Corinthians 12:4–11 (ESV) *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.*

1. **The word of wisdom.** This gift can be described as Spirit-imparted wisdom to help people or address a situation according to God's will.
 - People marveled at the wisdom of Jesus (Mt 13:54); for example, see Mt 22:15-22. Concerning Stephen, Luke records that his opponents "could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking" (Ac 6:10, ESV).
2. **The word of knowledge.** This gift can be described as Spirit-imparted knowledge to help people or address a situation according to God's will.
 - An example is found in Acts, when the Holy Spirit revealed to Peter that Ananias lied to the apostles. (See Acts 5:1-5)

3. **Faith.** This gift can be described as Spirit-imparted faith that enables a person to know with extraordinary confidence the will of God for advancing his kingdom and purposes in a given situation.
 - It is reasonable to presume that the gift of faith was being manifested when Peter boldly declared healing and took the hand of the man crippled from birth (Ac 3:1-7), or when Paul boldly confronted a sorcerer and declared God would strike him blind (Ac 13:6-11).
4. **Gift of healing(s).** This gift can be described as the Spirit-empowered ability to heal someone apart from natural or medical means.
 - The gift of healing serves as a sign to authenticate the Gospel and demonstrate the nature of the kingdom of God (Mk 16:17-20). It points to the ultimate redemption of the human body, when God will raise the righteous dead to immortal life. God is glorified when his power and love are shown through the gift of healing (Jn 9:1-4; Mt 20:31-34).
5. **The working of miracles.** This gift can be described as the Spirit-empowered ability to perform powerful acts that transcend the ordinary course of nature.
 - Miracles, like healings, serve to confirm the Gospel and to glorify God, as well as in many cases show mercy to people.
 - Miracles may be manifested in a wide variety of ways. Biblically, Paul healed people through handkerchiefs and aprons. Jesus changed water into wine and walked on water. Paul struck an enemy of the Gospel with blindness, etc.
6. **Prophecy.** This gift can be described as the Spirit-imparted ability to receive and verbally communicate a specific message from God.
 - The gift of prophecy according to the New Testament should be primarily expressed to edify, exhort/encourage, and comfort people (1 Co 14:3).
 - Because of the supremacy of the authority of Scripture, all prophecies must be subordinated to and judged by Scripture.

- Prophecies should never undermine or usurp the “priesthood of the believer.” Every believer has direct access to God through Jesus Christ and can hear his voice and be led by his Spirit.
7. **Distinguishing between spirits.** This gift can be described as the Spirit-enlightened ability to discern whether the source or influence by which spiritual activity is taking place is human, demonic, angelic, or divine.
- Jesus discerned that Peter was speaking by the influence of Satan when he sought to dissuade him from going to the cross (Mt 16:23). Paul discerned the influence of an evil spirit in a slave girl who followed Paul and his team around Philippi (Ac 16:16-18). Peter discerned the hidden condition and intent of Simon the Magician’s heart when he offered money to acquire the ability to baptize people in the Spirit (Ac 8:20-23).
8. **Various kinds of tongues.** This gift can be described as the Spirit-given ability to communicate to God or others in speech that is unknown and unintelligible to the speaker.
- On the Day of Pentecost when the believers were first filled with the Spirit, they all spoke publicly in tongues and many people from different nations heard them telling the mighty works of God in their own languages (Ac 2:1-12).
 - The Book of Acts suggests that the ability to speak in tongues was a common experience for believers when they were filled with the Holy Spirit (Ac 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:6; 9:17 with 1 Co 14:18).
 - 1 Corinthians, however, distinguishes between speaking in tongues for personal edification and the various kinds of tongues that were expressed for the edification of others (1 Co 12:7-11, 28-30; 14:1-19).
9. **Interpretation of tongues.** This gift can be described as the Spirit-given ability to declare the meaning of an unintelligible utterance of tongues.
- Paul teaches that any time someone speaks in tongues to address the church it must be accompanied by an interpretation (1Co 14:27-28). Otherwise, the speaker should remain publicly silent.

- The interpretation may come through the person who spoke in tongues or through another person (1 Co 14:13, 27).

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. Has God ever empowered you to express any of the gifts discussed in this lesson? If so, which one(s)?
2. Do you earnestly desire to express any of these spiritual gifts? How are you pursuing this desire? What obstacles hinder your pursuit?

HOMEWORK

1. Review the lesson notes and reflect on whether you would like to receive and/or grow in any of the gifts that were discussed.
2. Take some time to pray about the gifts. Express any desire you may have to operate in any of the gifts. Ask God if he wants to express any of the spiritual gifts through you in a greater way.