

Study 9

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the reality of the supernatural operation of the gifts of the Spirit for today (1Cor. 12:8-10; Heb. 2:2-3).

Imagine what a gathering of the early church might have been like. For the most part they met in homes of various sizes from simple dwellings to large Roman households with spacious facilities. They gathered on the first day of the week (Sunday, 1Cor. 16:1), to worship with singing and music (Eph. 5:19), receive instruction in God's Word (1Cor. 4:17), celebrate Communion (1Cor. 11), be equipped (Eph. 4:12) and to exchange spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:6). This was a time when the New Testament was still being written. But even by the middle of the first century A.D. Many of the churches would have had handwritten manuscript copies of the apostles' writings. But not all these early church congregations would have had *all* of the available Divinely Inspired writings. This is why some scholars believe that the early church would have experienced a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit in its meetings resulting in extraordinary usage of spiritual gifts. It's also why some scholars believe that the gifts of the Holy Spirit *ceased* when the New Testament was completed (these people are referred to as "Cessationists" because they think the gifts of the Spirit have now ceased). But there are good reasons from Scripture to consider that the gifts of the Holy Spirit have not ceased and are indeed available for today...

1. List the 9 gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in First Corinthians 12:8-10 -

These gifts seem to fit into either of two categories: *Audible* Gifts or *Power* Gifts.

AUDIBLE GIFTS

2. Match the description of the particular gift with the gift it describes from you answer to Question 1 -

GIFT:

DESCRIPTION:

- Declaring what God is saying. Some refer to this as “forth-telling”
- This gift complements another gift of the Holy Spirit by explaining what was said
- Speaking a word from God in an unlearned language
- Pronouncing a right course of action
- Making known information

I was a teenager when I came into a Pentecostal church and saw these gifts in operation for the first time. It was common for these gifts to operate in every meeting. I then went one Sunday night when a guest speaker from New Zealand, Pastor Des Short, was the guest speaker. He preached then invited people for prayer. As he prayed for people he said things to them that God had revealed to him for them. I knew many of these people he was speaking to. I also knew that there was no way he could have known of the details of these people’s lives as he prayed for and spoke to these people. That night he exercised the Word of Knowledge with around 200 people.

3. Should we have any interest in using these Spiritual Gifts according to First Corinthians 14:1?
-

It appears that there are two general categories of “speaking in tongues”. Firstly, there is a prayerful speaking in tongues which seems to be referred to in First Corinthians 14:2.

4. How does First Corinthians 14:2 show us that there is a speaking in tongues that is like praying rather than like prophesying?
-

But then there appears to be a speaking in tongues that is *prophesying* in an unknown language that requires that it be interpreted (1Cor. 14:5).

This means that there may be times in a worship service when people are *praying* in tongues - and this does not need to be interpreted. But there could be someone who senses that their expression of speaking in tongues is not praying to God, but is a prophecy in an unknown language - which then needs to be interpreted.

5. How might God use speaking in tongues when it is prophesied? Note First Corinthians 14:22.
-

6. How important did the Apostle Paul think that praying in tongues was according to what he wrote in First Corinthians 14:5 and 18?
-

The Gift of Prophecy is not necessarily the same as what we read of the Old Testament prophets doing. It is perhaps closer to what non-Prophets did during the Old Testament times when the Holy Spirit came upon them (Numbers 11:25-26; 1Samuel 10:10-11). Thus, the nature of this type gift is susceptible to human weaknesses.

7. Because the gift of prophecy is not the same as an utterance by a Prophet, how does First Corinthians 14:29 say that it should be handled? (Note the usage of the word “prophet” in this verse seems to indicate *‘the one using the the gift of prophecy’* rather than someone called to be a ‘prophet’.)
-

POWER GIFTS

3. Match the type of spiritual gift with its description-

-The gift to believe for something extraordinary to happen which provides the confidence to pray, the ongoing vision to work toward it, and the hope that it will come to pass.

-The gift to help the sick or injured recover extraordinarily.

-The gift to receive from God extraordinary answers to prayer

-The gift to distinguish and detect demonic interference through a person

4. Have you ever seen any of these spiritual gifts used?
-

But are these gifts for today? It is argued that since First Corinthians 13 states that when that which is “perfect” has come these gifts will be done away with. The “perfect” referred to here is thought to mean the Canon of the New Testament - that is, all 27 books of the New Testament. But can hardly be what the Apostle was referring to. Rather, he was pointing to the Resurrection of all people (1Cor. 15). History bears abundant witness of how God has continued to grace his children with these spiritual gifts and many others besides. Let’s be open to God for Him to give us any of these gifts that He so choses.

Amen.