

Receive Ye the Holy Spirit

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About this Book

Believers greatly misunderstand the importance of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Many do not believe that it is God's Will for them to be filled with the Spirit. Some simply do not know anything about the baptism of the Holy Spirit because they were never taught about it, and many others have been taught erroneously that this passed away when those original disciples died or that it is only for so-called "spiritual" people. Some think that the Holy Spirit is automatically given when we are water baptized. And then there are those who believe we are to receive the baptism, but they do not want to receive certain gifts, such as speaking in tongues, for fear of offending other people. How wonderful that God's Word is very clear on all of this! His Word removes any doubts or misunderstandings that we may have.

The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

(Luk.4:18) The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovering of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are bruised, (19) To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. - Jesus

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all of God's people was prophesied in the Old Testament in several places. The Lord said in His Word that He would speak through His prophets and reveal His plans to His people. ***(Amo.3:7) Surely the Lord God will do nothing, except he reveals his secret to his servants the prophets.*** Long before the birth of Christ, the Lord was revealing His plan to pour out His Spirit on mankind. ***(Joe.2:28) And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: (29) and also upon the***

servants and upon the maidservant in those days I will pour out my Spirit. And, (Isa.44:3) For I will pour water upon him who is thirsty, and streams upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon your offspring.

We see that the Lord promised this through Jeremiah. (Jer.31:33) But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (34) And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more. And He repeated His promise through Ezekiel. (Eze.36:26) A new heart also I will give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. (27) And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my ordinances, and do them.

It is very clear God was saying that He was going to put His Spirit in His people, and the main reason for

this is that He planned to initiate a new covenant with His people, one with better promises (Hebrews 8:7-13). The problem with the old covenant was that no man was able to keep all the Law because man is powerless to save himself from the consequences of sin, which is death. The Law was used to show man how truly corrupt he was, and that if he broke even one small part of the Law, he was worthy of death.

God the Father chose to solve this problem by sending His Own Son to earth as our Sacrifice. That is the only way for man to fulfill the requirements of the Law and be justified before Him. This made it possible to bring man back into right relationship with Him. ***(Rom.8:1) There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. (3) For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: (4) that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*** All our needs are provided for in Christ Jesus! Glory to God! And the Spirit empowers us to take advantage of this.

Jesus Sent into the World

The prophet Isaiah, as well as many others (Micah 5:2; Hosea 11:1; etc.), prophesied of a day when the Lord would raise-up from His Own people One Who would deliver them, speaking about His Son, Jesus. *(Isa. 7:14) Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* (“Immanuel” means “God with us.”) ... *(Isa. 11:1) And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. (2) And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.* ... *(42:1) Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delights: I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.*

God the Father sent His Son Jesus into the world

as His solution to the problem of our carnal flesh and our sin. (*Luk. 1:35*) *The angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; for that reason also, the Holy Child will be called the Son of God.* John tells us, (*Joh. 3:16*) *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes on him should not perish, but have eternal life.* Jesus is our Salvation, and all our needs are met in Him and through Him. He is our perfect Example to follow. He was God, but He was also human like us, and therefore needed to be filled by the Holy Spirit. (*Mat. 3:13*) *Then comes Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. (14) But John would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me? (15) But Jesus answering said to him, Allow [it] now: for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he allows him.* Jesus is our Example to follow as believers, so we are to be baptized in water, too.

Shortly afterward, Jesus would also be baptized in the Holy Spirit, just as we are to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (*Mat. 3:16*) *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up immediately from the water: and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and*

coming upon him; (17) and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased. Some people think that Jesus was able to do all the supernatural things that He did because He was acting in His divine Power as God. This is not true. When He was sent to earth, He chose to leave His divine Power behind and live the life of a normal man in the flesh. *(Php.2:5) Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) who, existing in the form of God, did not count the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; (8) and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient [even] unto death, yes, the death of the cross.* Jesus was Son of Man according to His flesh and Son of God according to His Spirit, as Paul said. *(Rom.1:3) Concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, (4) who was declared [to be] the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; [even] Jesus Christ our Lord.* Jesus, as the “Son of Man,” was dependent upon the

Holy Spirit for guidance and direction, as well as for the power needed to do the signs and wonders and miracles that He did. These signs were worked through Him after His infilling. (*Joh.5:19*) *Jesus therefore answered and said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father doing: for whatever things he does, these the Son also does in like manner. (20) For the Father loves the Son, and shows him all things that he himself does. It was the Holy Spirit Who showed Him what the Father was doing. His Life on this earth is a perfect illustration for us as to what it is like to live as a man in covenant relationship with God, who is filled with the Holy Spirit. (*Heb.2:17*) *Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren.* He was as He taught, Son of God in the Son of man. He was both an example and a perfect sacrifice. The Spirit was poured out upon Jesus to empower Him for the work of the ministry that the Father had purposed for Him to accomplish. (*Act.10:38*) [*Even*] *Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.**

Promises Given to Christ in Us

It is important for us to understand that as believers, we have a vital role to play in God's plan of salvation for mankind. We are to continue the work and ministry of Jesus Himself. According to the Word, our bodies are "vessels" that are able to hold the very Presence and Power of God. (*2Co.4:7*) ***But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves.*** When we were born-again spiritually, we became a part of the Body of Christ on the earth. Jesus lives and walks in the true Body of Christ. God has given us many great promises in His Word, and because we are "in" Jesus, and He is "in" us, we are entitled to those promises! (Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:4; etc.)

Here is what the Word tells us about this. (*Gal.3:16*)

Now to Abraham

were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He does not say, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And

to your seed, which is Christ. So we can see the promises are also to us if we abide in Him. (*Gal. 3:29*) *And if you are Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.* And in another place it says, (*Joh. 1:12*) *But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, [even] to those who believe on his name: (13) who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* The promises were given to Abraham and to his “seed,” which is Jesus. As born-again believers, we should believe and confess that Jesus now lives in us! (*Gal. 2:20*) *I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me: and that [life] which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, [the faith] which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.*

Speaking to believers, Paul said, (*Col. 1:27*) *To whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* As we read the Word of God, the Holy Spirit gives us understanding and the ability to believe it. He also places the Word into our hearts because He is recreating Jesus inside each one of us. Jesus is our “spirit man,” and when we put the Word in our hearts, our spirit man is strengthened and grows into His Image. It is like

what happens when we eat food. We take in the nutrients, they are digested and brought to all the other parts of the body so that it may grow and be strengthened.

Our spirit man needs spiritual food to grow and mature, and that spiritual food is Jesus, Who is the Word of God. (*Joh. 1:14*) And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth. ... (*6:35*) Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life: he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes on me shall never thirst. ... (*51*) I am the living bread which came down out of heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: yea and the bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world. ... (*Joh.6:54*) He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day. (*55*) For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. (*56*) He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. When we believe the Word, and receive it by faith, and act on that faith, then we are truly abiding in Him. (*Joh.15:4*) Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit from itself, unless it abides in the vine; so neither can you, unless you abide in me. Jesus lives in us and we are in Him, so therefore all the promises are given to us

as well! And the baptism of the Holy Spirit that He received is one of those promises that we are given! Amen!

Throughout the Word we can plainly see that it is the Will of the Father to put His Spirit within us. We read, *(Gal.3:14) That upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.* In another place, *(Act.2:38) And Peter [said] to them, Repent, and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (39) For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all who are afar off, [even] as many as the Lord our God shall call to him.* So the promise of the Holy Spirit is given to us. And we're told, *(1Cor.6:19) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have from God? and you are not your own; (20) for you were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body.*

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is Promised to Believers

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the promise given to every New Covenant believer for strength, power, and boldness from God, which enables us to fully and effectively give the testimony of Jesus and all He has accomplished. It enables us to bear witness that He is Who He said He is. Jesus spoke much about this to His disciples and stressed the importance of the Spirit working through them to accomplish the things that the Father had purposed for them to do. He commanded them to remain where they were until the Spirit was poured out upon them. (*Luk. 24:49*) *And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high.* We see from this that no one is sent to minister without the Holy Spirit. Also, we read here, (*Act. 1:4*) *And, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but*

to wait for the promise of the Father, which, [he said,] you heard from me: (5) for John indeed baptized with water; but you shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

In the same way, we are to wait on the Lord and be filled with the Holy Spirit, in order that we may be fully equipped for the work. Much of what He wants to do through us is supernatural, therefore, we need His Power. ***(Joh.14:12) Truly, truly, I say to you, He who believes on me, the works that I do he shall do also; and greater [works] than these he shall do; because I go to the Father.*** As the disciples did, we also need to wait for guidance and direction from God. Where any work of ministry is concerned, we need to let Him take the lead and show us what He would have us do, as well as when we should do it. Too many times, we find that people “went” when they were not “sent” by God, but by man. This can result in many troubles and hardships that could have been avoided if they had just been patient, and waited on the Lord for His instructions.

It is important to realize that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not an experience that we have to wait for months or years to receive. All of God’s promises are received by faith, so we must receive the promise of the Holy Spirit by faith as well. ***(Gal.3:2) This only***

would I learn from you, Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Our Heavenly Father wants us to ask Him for the things we need, and to believe in our hearts that we have received them. (*Luk. 11:9*) And I say to you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. (10) *For everyone who asks receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks it shall be opened.* (11) *And of which of you who is a father shall his son ask a loaf, and he give him a stone? or a fish, and he for a fish give him a serpent?* (12) *Or [if] he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion?* (13) *If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall [your] heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?* Notice the Lord is commanding believers to ask Him for the Holy Spirit.

It is plainly God's Will to give us His Holy Spirit. (*1Jn. 5:14*) And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us: (15) and if we know that he hears us whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him. And since it is His Will to do so, then after we have asked, we are to believe it is a fact that we have received the fulfillment of our request. (*Mar. 11:24*) *Therefore*

I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. If you believe that you have received, then your actions will prove you believe that you have received. And giving God thanks for the thing you have received is a sure sign that you believe that it is in your possession. This is true for anything that we receive from God by faith. (Php.4:6) In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. So let us give Him thanks for everything He has given us!

(Act.5:32) And we are witnesses of these things; and [so is] the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him. One major hindrance to receiving the Holy Spirit can be willful rebellion against God in some area of our life. (Heb.10:26) For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no longer a sacrifice for sins, (27) but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries. However, notice this is not speaking about a failure to obey due to weakness, for the Spirit will help that.

Holy Spirit Poured out on Pentecost

The Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost, and it was never taken back. The disciples waited as Jesus had commanded them to do, and then it happened! *(Act. 2:1) And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. (2) And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. (3) And there appeared to them tongues distributed, as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. (4) And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (5) Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. (6) And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because every man heard them speaking in his own language. (7) And they were all amazed and marveled, saying, Behold, are not all these who speak Galileans?* The multitude could not understand how this was

possible because all these men speaking in new tongues were simple men from the region around Galilee. Most of them were uneducated and worked common jobs before they met Jesus.

They were “nobodies” as far as the world was concerned, but God loves to use people like this in ministry because then He gets the glory instead of someone who has a natural ability to speak well, or possesses other skills that they can take credit for. *(Act. 2:8) And how do we hear, every man in our own language wherein we were born? (9) Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, in Judaea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, (10) in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, (11) Cretans and Arabians, we hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God. (12) And they were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to another, *What does this mean?* (Act. 2:13) But others mocking said, They are filled with new wine.* This was absolutely a supernatural happening that could not be denied. There was no way for these uneducated men to speak all those languages, and the devout men of the city knew it.

However, some of those standing by accused the

disciples of being drunk. (*Act.2:13*) ***But others mocking said, They are filled with new wine.*** And Peter quickly addressed this misrepresentation of what had happened. (*14*) ***But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spoke forth to them, [saying,] Men of Judea, and all you who dwell at Jerusalem, be this known to you, and give ear to my words. (15) For these are not drunk, as you suppose; seeing it is [but] the third hour of the day; (16) but this is that which has been spoken through the prophet Joel: (17) And it shall be in the last days, says God, I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh: And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams: (18) Yes and on my servants and on my maidenservants in those days I will pour forth of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.*** In this prophecy, God declares that by the Holy Spirit, through dreams, visions, or prophecy, He will give His people warnings about what is to come, as well as supernatural insights into what He is doing or planning to do.

He will guide and direct His people as to the things that He would have them do.

In his message, Peter also gave all credit to Jesus for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that took place on that day and, in doing so, he affirmed

that their speaking in tongues was from the Lord. *(Act.2:32) This Jesus God raised up, of which we all are witnesses. (33) Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured forth this, which you see and hear.* Furthermore, he told them that this supernatural experience was available for any of them that would repent of their sins, pursue the high calling of God, and submit their lives to Him. *(Act.2:38) And Peter [said] to them, Repent, and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (39) For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all who are afar off, [even] as many as the Lord our God shall call to him.*

The Work of the Holy Spirit

Jesus explained to His disciples the various functions of the Holy Spirit, and the many benefits that would be provided for them as they relied on Him for guidance and direction. Jesus was very aware of the trials and adversities in this life because He had dealt with them when He walked on this earth in human form. *(Heb. 4:15) For we do not have a high priest who cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but one who has been in all points tempted like [we are, yet] without sin.* Jesus Himself went through the same things that those early disciples did, which are the same things we go through today. He knew that they would need the Lord's Wisdom, so He promised to send the Holy Spirit to guide them. *(Joh. 16:7) Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. (8) And he, when he has come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.* The

Holy Spirit makes these things known to us and proves to us that they are true. He reveals the truth of the Word, gives His understanding of it, and then writes it upon our hearts. The Holy Spirit brings to us conviction of sin in our lives, and He uses the Truth of the Word to do it.

The Word of God is often referred to as “Light.” *(Psa. 119:105) Your word is a lamp to my feet, And light to my path.* So the Word tells us where we stand and where we are to go. Jesus says of Himself, *(Joh. 8:12) ... I am the light of the world: he who follows me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.* Also, we read, *(2Co. 4:6) Seeing it is God, Who said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* Jesus, Who is the Word made flesh and the Light of the world, exposes the darkness in our hearts. *(Eph. 5:13) But all things when they are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for everything that is made manifest is light.* And we are told, *(Heb. 4:12) For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.* (13) *And there is no creature that is not manifest in his sight: but*

all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

The Word of God makes us aware of our sin. The Holy Spirit brings to our remembrance the Word to convict us. *(Rom. 12:2) And do not be fashioned according to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.* Apostle Paul tells us, *(Php. 2:13) For it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure.* And as this work is being accomplished in us, we receive Godly sorrow, which brings us to repentance. Oh, praise the Lord for His goodness and mercy towards us!

(Rom. 2:4) Or do you despise the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? Repentance is truly a gift from God. He is very patient and kind to us, and we should be this way as well towards others. *(2Co. 7:10) For godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation, [a repentance] which brings no regret: but the sorrow of the world works death. (11) For behold, this selfsame thing, that you were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it worked in you, yes what clearing of yourselves, yes what indignation,*

yes what fear, yes what longing, yes what zeal, yes what avenging! In everything you approved yourselves to be pure in the matter. Godly sorrow brings about a devout fear of the Lord and a real respect for His Word.

When the Lord brings about this good work in our hearts, it is easy for us to receive. It is a complete work that brings real change and bears the fruit of righteousness in our lives. *(Jas. 3:17) But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy.* The Wisdom of the Lord is Truth, and always reflects His Nature and Character. *(18) And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.* This means that our potential for bearing fruit and spiritual growth is increased when we are at peace and love one another.

The simplest definition of Truth, *Alétheia* in the Greek New Testament, is “Nothing left out.” Sometimes the Truth is like a puzzle with many pieces, but all those pieces must fit together. That is the Holy Spirit’s job. The Holy Spirit shows us how they all go together. There are things that we cannot possibly know, but He knows them, and He wants to reveal them to us. He can bring these things to

our understanding in such a way that they make sense, and then we can follow His lead in order to accomplish whatever is needed. He also reveals to us things that are going to happen so that we will not be caught off-guard and taken by surprise. (*Joh. 16:13*) ***However when he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but whatever things he shall hear, [these] he shall speak: and he shall declare to you the things that are to come.*** This knowledge can come to us in the form of dreams, visions, words of knowledge, or words of prophecy.

The Lord wants us all to seek Him through His Word in order to know what He has given to us, what we can expect to receive, and what He requires of us. He wants to reveal to us His methods for dealing with the issues we face daily, and how to overcome them. He also wants to show us how we can live more abundantly despite trials and adversities (John 10:10). The understanding of all these things is revealed to us by the Lord through His Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit Who will also empower us to do those things that we are not able to do in our own ability or strength. (*Joh. 16:14*) ***He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare [it] to you. (15) All things whatever the Father has are mine: therefore I said, that he takes of mine, and***

shall declare [it] to you.

The apostle Paul prays a very profound prayer concerning God's divine revelation to His people. He prays to the Lord asking Him to give to the believers there a "spirit of wisdom and revelation," so that the Word of God would be opened up to them, and that He would supernaturally give them the ability to understand it. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. *(Eph. 1:15) For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and the love which [you show] toward all the saints, (16) do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; (17) that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; (18) having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, (19) and what the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might.* We need to frequently ask the Lord to refresh this in ourselves! In Acts they were refilled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31).

There are times when we do not have the Word with us and cannot look-up a specific scripture

concerning something we are dealing with, but the Holy Spirit can bring just the right words into our minds. As we read and study God's Word with the help of the Holy Spirit, He writes the Word on our hearts. Then, in those moments when it is needed, He retrieves the Word that was written on our heart and brings it to mind so that we can use it for whatever the need may be. ***(Joh. 14:26) But the Comforter, [even] the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you.***

The Holy Spirit brings about in us a radical, amazing change in our capability to be effective witnesses for Jesus. In us and through us, He reveals Who Jesus is, because the Spirit always glorifies and honors the Name of Jesus. The Spirit gives us power and boldness to effectively testify of the wonderful works of Jesus, and when this happens, there is a noticeable change in the way we do things. ***(Joh. 15:26) But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, [even] the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, he shall bear witness of me.*** The testimony that we give of Him is not only by our spoken words, but also through our actions. The demand of the Word causes us, as followers of Jesus, to be set apart from the world and

its ways. (*Joh. 17:14*) ***I have given them your word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*** (15) ***I do not pray that you should take them from the world, but that you should keep them from the evil [one].*** (16) ***They are not of the world even as I am not of the world.*** (17) ***Sanctify them in the truth: your word is truth.*** (18) ***As you have sent me into the world, even so I sent them into the world.*** (19) ***And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.*** Being in agreement with the Word sanctifies us.

When the body of Christ moves in the Power of the Holy Spirit, it will be undeniable Whom they represent! (*Rom. 15:19*) ***In the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Spirit; so that from Jerusalem, and all around even to Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*** When led by the Spirit, the very Nature, Character, and Authority in which we do things serve as a testimony of the Life of Jesus being expressed through us. When we are “in” His Name, then we are in His Nature, His Character, and His Authority, because that’s what the word “name” means. We represent Him and His Kingdom here on earth to those around us. We are His witnesses!

(Act. 1:8) But you shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit has come upon you: and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth.

Think of a power tool that you want to use to complete a building project. The tool itself has everything it needs to complete the task. It just needs to be plugged into a power supply so that electricity can flow through the cord or battery and into the power tool. Any power tool is fairly useless if you do not plug it in and turn it on, so just as in our example of the power tool, we need to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to be able to carry out the work that the Lord has given each of us to accomplish. The high calling of God is supernatural, and we will not be able to accomplish this in our own ability or strength.

As the Power of the Holy Spirit is unleashed through us, supernatural signs, wonders, and miracles performed through us give glory and honor to Jesus. ***(Mar. 16:17) And these signs shall accompany those who believe: in my name they shall cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; (18) they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no way hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. ... (20) And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the***

Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. When Peter and John were arrested for teaching the people about Jesus, including the resurrection from the dead through Him, it caused an uproar among the rulers and elders and scribes, so they were brought in for questioning. Eventually they were released, but only after they were threatened not to speak any more about Him (Acts 4:3-18). When released, Peter and John went back to the rest of the disciples and told them everything that had happened.

Upon hearing them, the rest of the disciples cried out to the Lord in prayer concerning the persecution of the saints in Jerusalem. They asked the Lord to give them boldness to speak the Word of God, and to confirm it with signs and wonders. (*Act. 4:29*) *And now, Lord, look on their threatenings, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, (30) while you stretch forth your hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of your holy Servant Jesus. (31) And when they had prayed, the place was shaken in which they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. (32) And the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul: and not one [of them] said that any of the things*

which he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. (33) And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

This will again be a common occurrence among the people of God as we are filled with His Spirit and look to Him for guidance and direction in the days to come.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit (After Pentecost)

If we look at other occurrences in the Word where people received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we quickly realize that the Lord will often do things differently from one time to the next. Most often, a person will become “born again,” then receive water baptism, and after that they will receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. However, this is not always the case. Here we read about Apollos, a follower of Jesus, who knew only of the baptism of John. *(Act. 18:24) Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by race, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures. (25) This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, knowing only the baptism of John: (26) and he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him to them, and*

expounded to him the way of God more accurately. (27) And when he was minded to pass over into Achaia, the brethren encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him: and when he had come, he helped them greatly who had believed through grace; (28) for he powerfully confuted the Jews, [and that] publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

Here is an instance where Paul came across a group of disciples who knew only of the baptism unto repentance of John (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3). It appears they did not really have a complete understanding about Jesus and all that He had done. And they absolutely did not know about the baptism of the Holy Spirit; they were just going in the knowledge they had. *(Act. 19:1) And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples:*

(2) and he said to them, Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? And they [said] to him, No, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was [given]. Notice, Paul immediately asked them if they received the Holy Spirit after they had been water baptized, because he wanted them to know about all the Covenant promises that the Lord had given to them.

(Act.19:3) And he said, Into what then were you baptized? And they said, Into John's baptism. (4) And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on him who should come after him, that is, on Jesus. (5) And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. (6) And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied. (7) And they were in all about twelve men. So after Paul explained everything to them in greater detail, they chose to be baptized in Jesus' Name. They more fully understood that the baptism of repentance in the New Covenant was a sign of the cutting-off of the flesh and that they were now joined with Christ in His death. They knew their old man was now dead, and that they were no longer a slave to sin. And they knew that when they came up out of that water, they were given the ability to walk in the resurrection life of Jesus. *(Rom.6:4) We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.* They were all speaking in tongues and prophesying, which was proof that the Holy Spirit had come upon them after Paul laid his hands on them.

In this next account, Peter was used by the Lord in a very divinely inspired chain of events. Cornelius, a God-fearing man in Caesarea, received a vision. An angel of the Lord appeared to him, just as even today the Lord regularly dispatches His angels to aid His people, to fight on their behalf, and to deliver divine direction and warnings to them. (*Heb. 1:14*) ***Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of those who shall inherit salvation?*** The angel directed him to send messengers to Joppa, where they would find Peter. (*Act. 10:3*) ***He saw in a vision openly, as it were about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying to him, Cornelius. (4) And he, fastening his eyes on him, and being frightened, said, What is it, Lord? And he said to him, Your prayers and your alms have gone up for a memorial before God. (5) And now send men to Joppa, and fetch one Simon, who is surnamed Peter: (6) he lodges with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside.***

They were told to bring Peter back with them to Caesarea, so that he might share with Cornelius everything that the Lord wanted him to hear. It is important to know that Cornelius and his people were foreigners, and according to Jewish Law, foreigners were considered “unholy” or “unclean.” But in the New Covenant those who are circumcised in

heart are clean. So while the servants of Cornelius were on their way to Joppa, the Lord gave Peter a vision, which was repeated three times, yet which he did not immediately understand (Acts 10:9-16). (Act. 10:17) Now while Peter was greatly perplexed in himself what the vision which he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry

for Simon's house, stood before the gate, (18) and called and asked whether Simon, who was surnamed Peter, was lodging there. (19) And while Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said to him, Behold, three men seek you. (20) But arise, and get down, and go with them, nothing doubting: for I have sent them.

Notice how the Holy Spirit put all this together, and used everything that had happened, to cause Peter to understand the meaning of the vision. He also gave Peter very specific directions, which left no doubt in his mind what he was to do. The Spirit knows the end from the beginning. There is much freedom and peace of mind when we put our trust in Him. If we are willing to lay aside what we think we know, and look to Him for His guidance and direction, we can expect to live a truly supernatural life! (Pro. 3:5) Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And do not lean on your own understanding: (6) In

all your ways acknowledge him, And he will direct your paths.

The next day, Peter and some of the men from Joppa traveled with these men back to Caesarea, to meet with Cornelius. As it turned out, Cornelius had gathered all his family and close friends together in his house to wait for Peter's arrival. *(Act. 10:25) And when it came to pass that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. (26) But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. (27) And as he talked with him, he went in, and finds many assembled: (28) and he said to them, You yourselves know how it is an unlawful thing for a man who is a Jew to join himself or come to one of another nation; and [yet] to me God has shown that I should not call any man common or unclean: (29) therefore also I came without contradiction, when I was sent for...*

Peter then shared with them what he had personally witnessed while he was with Jesus. What an incredible opportunity that must have been for these people! They heard a firsthand account from someone who knew Jesus personally and had spent almost every day with Him over a three-year period. *(Act. 10:44) While Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the word.*

(45) And those of the circumcision who believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. (46) For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. (The Jewish believers knew the Holy Spirit had fallen upon these people because they were speaking in tongues, just like the disciples on Pentecost.) Then answered Peter, (47) Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? (48) And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ...

We, too, can be His witnesses to the world! Jesus is the Word made flesh (John 1:14). If we spend time with Him through studying the Word, through allowing Him to live through us, through talking with Him in prayer, we can know Him personally. We can also share our testimonies of all the wonderful things He has done as we walk together with Him.

Spiritual Gifts

The God Whom we serve is almighty and all powerful! With our natural minds, we cannot begin to understand His Wisdom. It is only through the Holy Spirit that we can perceive things from His heavenly perspective. The world around us is not as it appears. There is an invisible, spiritual realm that exists alongside our own physical realm, where the kingdoms of Light and darkness exist. (*Eph. 6:12*) ***For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual [hosts] of wickedness in the heavenly [places].*** The effects of the spiritual realm can most definitely be recognized and felt by us, because there is constant warfare taking place in the heavenly realm between the two kingdoms, a warfare which directly affects mankind (Revelation 12:7).

The goal of this warfare is to acquire the souls of men, the “soul” being a person’s mind, will,

and emotions. From our perspective in time, this warfare is going on at this very moment. But from God's perspective, His heavenly Kingdom has already won the victory since He is outside of time.

(Rev.11:15) And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world has become [the kingdom] of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign forever and ever.

The Bible refers to Satan as the “god” of this world, and tells us that he and his kingdom cause those people who are unbelieving to not be able to see or to hear the Truth of the Gospel. ***(2Co.4:4) In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn [upon them].*** However, as true believers in Christ Jesus, we have been spiritually “born from above” into God’s Kingdom. Our faith in the Good News of what Jesus has accomplished at the Cross has opened our spiritual eyes and ears to see and hear. Hallelujah!

Now we are to share with others what we have

seen and heard, although the kingdom of darkness opposes us and the message we bear at every turn. That means we must learn to operate in every spiritual gift we have been given by our Father in heaven, because these are some of the weapons we have been given to wage war against our spiritual enemies. We are eternal, spiritual beings, and therefore, not of this world. We are just passing through. ***(Joh. 17:14) I have given them your word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. (Php. 3:20) For our citizenship is in heaven; from which also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.***

We are disciples of Jesus and we are called to war in the Spirit against the kingdom of darkness. Our battle is not against people, but against the demonic spirits influencing people and situations. As believers, we are forbidden to fight the way that the world fights, by using physical methods. We are commanded to instead turn the other cheek (Luke 6:29), and to bless those who persecute and shamefully abuse us (Matthew 5:44). The powerful spiritual weapons that the Lord has given us are able to overcome anything that the enemy uses to come against us. Notice that much of this battle is fought in the battleground of our mind. ***(2Co. 10:3) For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war***

according to the flesh (4) (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds), (5) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

The enemy attacks us in our thoughts and tries to convince us to believe in his lies. He wants us to agree with his lies, because our agreement is the permission he needs to establish a foothold in our lives. Paul calls the lies of Satan “imagination, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God.” Also notice that this is an ongoing battle. The enemy will not stop trying to deceive us. We are to cast down his thoughts in our mind, break all agreements with them and not receive them, every time he sends his fiery darts against us. Instead, we are to confess what God says about the matter and agree with Him.

The Lord has given to His people, through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, very powerful weapons to use against the kingdom of darkness. His spiritual gifts empower us in ways that the enemy simply cannot defeat. *(Isa.54:17) No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against you in judgment you shall con-*

demn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness which is of me, says the Lord. Satan is limited in what he can do because the gifts either bypass, or completely disarm, anything he is able to accomplish. **(1Co.12:4) Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. (5) And there are diversities of ministries, and the same Lord. (6) And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who works all things in all. (7) But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to the profit of all.** The Church is called to be the “body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 6:16,12:27; Ephesians 4:12). Jesus is still ministering on the earth, only now He is doing it in a larger, corporate body of people. We are His eyes, ears, hands, and feet; we are His body on the ground ministering to the needs of the people. The gifts of the Spirit will always edify the body of Christ and promote spiritual growth in all its members. Above all else, the gifts will honor and glorify Jesus.

Years ago, the Lord gave me an experience that helped me to more fully understand how we are to view the gifts of the Spirit. I was with some friends enjoying a dip in a pool of water. We were standing in it about chest deep. The surface of the water was totally calm and peaceful, and I was noticing the movements of a friend who was in the water near me, a short distance away. Every time he would move

slightly, a track of small ripples or waves would fan out from him until they faded. I was captivated by this, and felt as if I heard the Lord tell me to pay really close attention to what was coming next. Suddenly, my friend went from just standing still to walking past me, wading through the water. As he moved forward, those ripples fanned out behind him and continued spreading in all directions as he passed by. I was made to remember the scripture where Jesus sent out the seventy men in pairs to go ahead of Him into all the places where He intended to go. ***(Luk. 10:1) Now after these things the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, where he himself was about to come. ... (9) and heal the sick who are in it, and say to them, The kingdom of God is come near to you.***

I believe the Lord was showing me a parable, and in this parable my friend represented the Lord. Those ripples, and the wake that was formed because of his movements in the water, represented the influence of the Lord's Presence on our physical realm. More specifically, they represented the gifts of the Holy Spirit in operation among His people. The gifts are expressions of His Nature and Character being manifested through us. He showed me that my focus should not be on the ripples, but on the One

Who made the ripples. The ripples went out and drew attention to the One making them! In much the same way, we are not to focus our attention on the gifts, but upon the Gift Giver. We serve a supernatural God, and it only makes sense that supernatural things would happen when He or any part of His Kingdom is near. The gifts of the Spirit are proof that the Kingdom of God has come near, and they point to Him just like a road sign. People of the world take notice when these things happen right before their eyes, so let us be those vessels that carry His Presence everywhere we go.

The Lord gives each one different gifts, so that everyone in the body has a part to play, and so that everyone is needed. ***(1Pe.4:10) According as each has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*** By doing it this way, He also lessens the chance for someone to become puffed-up and full of pride in the gifts they have been given. ***(Rom.12:3) For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God has dealt to each man a measure of faith.*** (4) *For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members do not have the same office: (5) so we, who are many,*

are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

The Lord will always equip His people to do the things He has called them to do, and to do them with excellence, no matter how big or small the task may be. Just as Jesus was filled with the Spirit and gifts to do His work so must His body be. ***(Rom. 12:6) And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, [let us prophesy] according to the proportion of our faith; (7) or ministry, [let us give ourselves] to our ministry; or he who teaches, to his teaching; (8) or he who exhorts, to his exhorting: he who gives, [let him do it] with liberality; he who rules, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*** We see in these verses that the character and integrity displayed while the gifts are in operation are every bit as important to the Lord as the actual gift itself.

Words of Wisdom and Knowledge - (1Co. 12:8) For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit. The world defines “wisdom” as “the ability to apply knowledge, experience, and good judgment in performing actions or making sound decisions.” Knowledge, on the other hand, is typically gained through study, and/or personal

experience, and/or observation. So “wisdom” and “knowledge” are not the same, but they can be used together to achieve a specific outcome or attain a specific goal. From a worldly sense, these are things that we as humans can, and often do, take credit for, but it is impossible to do that with either the Word of Wisdom, or the Word of Knowledge from God.

The only way that we can receive a word of wisdom or a word of knowledge is if the Holy Spirit gives them to us and they go beyond our natural wisdom and knowledge, because our natural wisdom and knowledge can be wrong. ***(1Co.2:9) But as it is written: Things which eye did not see, and ear did not hear, And [which] did not enter into the heart of man, Whatever things God prepared for those who love him. (10) But to us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. (11) For who among men knows the things of a man, except the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knows, except the Spirit of God. (12) But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us by God. (13) Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Spirit teaches; combining spiritual things with spiritual words.***

(14) Now the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged. Christians who are not filled with the Spirit are mostly dependent on the wisdom and knowledge of their own mind.

A word of wisdom or a word of knowledge can manifest in our minds as a Word that is over and above our reason and will often be accompanied with a “sense of knowing”. Like prophecy, time will usually tell if it is from God. ***(Jas.3:17) But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy.*** A word of knowledge many times will be given when there is a need for some type of information, direction, or instruction, which is many times not available in natural ways. It is a good practice to get a confirmation from the Lord in some way that this is what you believe you heard from Him. You can ask Him to give you a scripture or some other sign to confirm that this is, in fact, what He is telling you. Doing this will help you to grow and mature in your gift and give you confidence that you are hearing the Holy Spirit.

Both words of wisdom and words of knowledge from God can be used to resolve a multitude of

issues. They can be applied to everyday life issues or to solve problems in the home or at work, or to make critical decisions in a time of urgency or crisis. When the leaders of the early church were dealing with a problem concerning the new Gentile believers at the time, the Holy Spirit spoke a word of wisdom through James, helping them to come into agreement and reach a conclusion that brought peace and order among them (Acts 15:13-21). Many men in the Bible called on the Lord for His Wisdom in dealing with invading armies, persecutions, or even their future plans. Whatever the case may be, we can be confident in the fact that the Lord knows our situation from beginning to end, and that He has the answers we need for any questions we may have.

A key to receiving God's Wisdom and Knowledge is to wait on Him, to trust in Him, and not be in a rush to do what we think needs to be done. **(Pro. 3:5) *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding: (6) In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will direct your paths.*** Waiting on the Lord should be an active pursuit of His Will for your situation. We need to maintain the expectation of receiving that which we are believing for. We may not always get the answer that we think we should get, and not always as quickly that we

think it should come, but we need to be patient and put our trust in Him.

The Gift of Faith - (1Co.12:9) To another faith, in the same Spirit. As believers, faith is at the center of everything we do. Everything we have been given from the Lord we have to receive by faith. Apostle Paul said, **(Rom. 1:17) ... But the righteous shall live by faith.** This describes our daily walk with the Lord, standing on the Truth of the Word of God, and living it out before Him. Faith comes from both hearing and believing the Word of God. **(Rom. 10:17) So belief [comes] from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.**

However, the gift of faith is different; it is God's supernatural faith imparted to us by the Holy Spirit for a specific time and purpose. **(Mar.11:22) And Jesus answering says to them, Have faith in God. (23) Truly I say to you, Whoever shall say to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he says comes to pass; he shall have it.** Many translations say, "have faith in God," but the Greek here actually says "have the faith of God," or "have God's faith." [Editor's Note: The Greek word for "God" here, *theós*, is translated in the possessive case all through the New Testament, as in Romans

10:3,13:4; 1 Corinthians 3:9; etc.] This completely changes how we apply this verse. This speaks of a divine and supernatural faith that is not possible with man, but one that is given to us by God when needed, that we may apply to the situations, or “mountains,” we face. Continuing in our text, we read, *(Mar. 11:24) Therefore I say to you, All things whatever you pray and ask for, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.* “Receive” in this text actually says “received” in the original Greek, meaning we are to believe that we “have received” the things that we ask for in prayer. We need to believe that it has already been done! This verse makes the supernatural available to all the saints. It may or may not be used with a gift of faith.

The Holy Spirit will sometimes speak to us through dreams or visions. He may even speak a prophetic word, or words of wisdom or knowledge, through a person in the body that will stir-up and create an environment for the gift of faith to be used. Praying in the Spirit also stirs-up and activates the gifts that have been placed in us. This is like when you burn wood in a fire. You need to push the hot coals into the center of the fire and stir the pieces of wood around. Sometimes you also need to blow on it to cause it to burn hotter. This is how praying in the Spirit stirs-up the gifts. The gift of faith works

alongside with other gifts, such as the working of miracles and the gift of healings.

The Gifts of Healing - (1Co.12:9) ... **And to another gifts of healings, in the one Spirit.** This gift is God's divine power to heal, manifested by the Holy Spirit through a person, which flows to those that are sick with disease, or have been injured, or have some other physical infirmity. This healing is supernatural in nature and has nothing to do with medicines, doctors, or any other of man's methods. God alone receives the glory through this kind of healing. **(Isa.42:8) I am the Lord, that is my name; and my glory I will not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.** Much of the ministry of Jesus had to do with healing, therefore it should be the same with us today. As believers, we are His Body. We have a responsibility to meet the needs of those around us, and to point them to Jesus. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that He turned anyone away who came to Him for a healing. They came with faith because they saw all the healings He was doing. We come to Him by faith but not by sight for healing. Believe you "have received" them and you shall have them.

The Lord manifests healing in many different ways so that we will have to rely on His leading. In many

cases, we see healing was imparted through the laying on of hands. (*Luk.4:40*) ***And when the sun was setting, all those who had any sick with diverse diseases brought them to him; and he (Jesus) laid his hands on each one of them, and healed them.*** In another instance, He just spoke the Word. (*Luk.5:17*) ***And it came to pass on one of those days, that he was teaching; and there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, who had come out of every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. (18) And behold, men bring on a bed a man who was paralyzed: and they sought to bring him in, and to lay him before him. (19) And not finding by what [way] they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went up to the housetop, and let him down through the tiles with his couch into the midst before Jesus. (20) And seeing their faith, he said, Man, your sins are forgiven you.*** Notice the Power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing. Jesus was sensitive to this move of the Spirit, and because He saw the faith of this man's friends, He gave them what they came for.

The Lord always looks for a person to express their faith in some way, so that they may receive the thing they are wanting from Him. (*Luk.5:24*) ***But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority***

on earth to forgive sins (he said to him who was paralyzed), I say to you, Arise, and take up your couch, and go to your house. (25) And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that on which he lay, and departed to his house, glorifying God.

Here is another example of a gift of healing. *(Act.5:14) And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women; (15) insomuch that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that, as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might overshadow some of them. (16) And there also came together the multitudes from the cities surrounding Jerusalem, bringing sick folk, and those who were troubled with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.* Here again we see people acting in faith to receive a touch from God, and Peter was used as a vessel for the healing Power of the Holy Spirit. God wants to glorify Himself by moving through His people in a mighty way through gifts of healings!

The Gift of Effecting of Miracles - (1Co.12:10) And to another workings of miracles. A “miracle” is an event that happens in which God intervenes supernaturally and seems to momentarily suspend or change the natural laws governing our physical realm. These signs and wonders give us a small,

but very impressive, glimpse of His Nature and awesome Power, and bear witness to the fact that His Kingdom has come near to us. We experience these things as supernatural, but from a heavenly perspective they are just considered normal. Miracles come in many forms, and there are numerous accounts of them in the Bible and in the life of believers.

For instance, there are healing miracles that go beyond what the gift of healing provides. These are “creative miracles” in which missing body parts are created that were never there since birth, or injured or amputated body parts that are re-created in a matter of minutes! Also, many people have been raised from the dead, just as when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. *(Joh. 11:43) And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. (44) He who was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound around with a cloth. Jesus says to them, Unbind him, and let him go.* And we have seen people raised from the dead in our day.

There are miracles of provision where the very necessities of life were in short supply and those things were supernaturally multiplied. *(Mat. 14:19) And he (This is Jesus.) commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass; and he took the five loaves, and*

the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes. (20) And they all ate, and were filled: and they took up that which remained over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. (21) And those who were eating were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Sometimes the provision just seemingly appeared out of nowhere! And we have seen believers in our day multiply food. *(Mat. 17:27) But, lest we cause them to stumble, go to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first comes up; and when you have opened his mouth, you shall find a shekel: that take, and give to them for me and you.*

There are miracles that defy any scientific explanation, yet have been witnessed by many people of different beliefs and backgrounds and have produced awe and wonder! *(Exo. 14:21) And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all the night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.* We have seen hurricanes turned by a spoken word. God is Almighty and All-powerful! He is Sovereign over all His creation. He can do whatever He wants to do, and many times He does it through His people. Jesus told us, *(Joh. 14:12) Truly, truly, I say to you, He who believes on me, the works that I do he shall*

do also; and greater [works] than these he shall do; because I go to the Father.

No, the gift of miracles has not passed away; it is being exercised all over the world, and it is given to whomever the Spirit wills to give it. We are commanded to (*1Co.12:31*) ... ***desire earnestly the greater gifts.*** So pray for these gifts. Ask Him for them, and expect to receive them! Earnestly seek the Lord in His Word for His Will concerning the things He is doing on the earth in these days. Be about the Father's business; lay down everything in your life that gets in the way of running after Him with all your heart, soul, and mind. Ask Him for a heart of love and compassion for people and their needs, and act on these as the opportunity arises.

The Gift of Discernings of Spirits - (*1Co.12:10*) ...
And to another discernings of spirits... As mentioned before, the spiritual realm is all around us but, for most people, it goes completely unnoticed. However, as "born again" Spirit-filled believers, we have been given, through the Word of God, spiritual "eyes and ears" to identify the influences around us. We are commanded to be vigilant and to "test" the spirits we encounter. (*1Jn.4:1*) ***Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are***

gone out into the world. (2) By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: (3) and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it comes; and now it is in the world already.

To “confess Jesus” means “to speak and act the same as Jesus.” The Greek word for “confess” in the New Testament means to “speak the same as.” The person you are dealing with either speaks and acts like Jesus, which is why they were called “Christians,” or they do not speak and act like Him. Bear in mind, however, that somebody who is spiritually immature just needs you to give them the grace and patience to let them grow at their own rate. Our discernment in this area will increase with the help of the Holy Spirit.

We will encounter many different kinds of spirits in our lifetime. Those chosen by the Holy Spirit may receive the “gift of distinguishing of spirits” for use in the body of Christ. Spiritually speaking, we are at war, and we need to know who we are dealing with, whether it’s the Holy Spirit Himself, or angels, or demons, or factious people being influenced by demons. We need to know, and this is a very

powerful spiritual weapon that is able to expose the enemy's plans. This weapon identifies what spirits are at work and what they are attempting to do, before they do it! ***(Job.5:12) He frustrates the devices of the crafty, So that their hands cannot perform their enterprise.*** Those operating in this gift may find themselves working alongside others that have been given additional words of wisdom or knowledge to aid in the removal of these threats. The Lord is very protective of His body. This is awesome! Praise the Lord!

Here is the powerful account of Paul using the gift of distinguishing of spirits to defeat what Satan was attempting to through a spirit of divination. ***(Act.16:16) And it came to pass, as we were going to the place of prayer, that a certain maid having a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. (17) The same following after Paul and us cried out, saying, These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation. (18) And this she did for many days. But Paul, being severely troubled, turned and said to the spirit, I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.*** Although this girl seemed to be speaking the truth, the spirit influencing her was an evil spirit and would have continued to lead people

astray. She was not saying these things to glorify God. Instead, the spirit of divination was trying to hinder the work of the Lord in that city, and Paul was given supernatural discernment about this. The Lord is very protective of His body and will alert us to the lies and deceptions of the enemy, if we are willing to listen!

The Speaking Gifts: Prophecy, Tongues, and Interpretation of Tongues - (1Co.12:10) ... **And to another prophecy; ... to another [diverse] kinds of tongues; ... to another the interpretation of tongues.** Apostle Paul gave his explanation of these three gifts all together, so we will also. Speaking in a new tongue is by far the most common evidence of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit and this happens when the Holy Spirit gives you the words to speak. Many people believe that speaking in tongues is not from the Lord. In fact, some mistakenly insist that it is from Satan. **(Mar.3:28) Truly I say to you, All their sins shall be forgiven to the sons of men, and their blasphemies with which ever they shall blaspheme: (29) but whoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin: (30) because they said, He has an unclean spirit.** Calling works of the Holy Spirit “satanic and demonic” is blaspheming the Holy Spirit! We do not want to make rash

statements with our mouths. No doubt that there are demonic tongues, but if you are asking the Lord for His spiritual gifts, He is not going to give you something from Satan!

The Lord wants us to ask Him for everything because He loves to give His children good gifts, so ask Him to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. (*Luk. 11:9*) *And I say to you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. (10) For everyone who asks receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks it shall be opened. (11) And of which of you who is a father shall his son ask a loaf, and he give him a stone? or a fish, and he for a fish give him a serpent? 12 Or [if] he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion? (13) If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall [your] heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?*

We receive everything from the Spirit by faith. (*1Jn. 5:14*) *And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us: (15) and if we know that he hears us whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him. We cannot*

rely on our feelings to determine whether or not we have received anything from the Holy Spirit. Many wrongly believe that they need to wait for a special sign or anointing from the Lord before they can speak in tongues. Others spoke in tongues when they first received the baptism, but then failed to continue doing so. They were waiting for some anointing to come that would move them to speak “automatically.” Tragically, this has led to many people not taking advantage of this incredible gift from the Lord.

Other hindrances to speaking in tongues can include doubt and unbelief, along with their related attitudes, such as fear or skepticism (Isaiah 1:18). ***(Jas. 1:6) But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting: for he who doubts is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. (7) For let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord.*** When standing in faith for the things of God, we must confess what He says and not what we are experiencing through our physical senses. Then the faith of God that we have been given brings these things into existence, because faith ***(Rom. 4:17) ... calls the things that are not, as though they were.*** Jesus said, ***(Joh. 6:63) ... the words that I have spoken to you are spirit, and are life.*** Our words are also spirit and life, and they are powerful to bring to

us the things that we confess. We need to resist speaking contrary to God's Word. The baptism of the Holy Spirit with all of His gifts are given from the Lord, and we see from the Word that it is His Will for us that we receive them, so we can just enter the rest, and believe that we have received!

Speaking in tongues can be as simple as asking Father for the Spirit and lifting-up your voice in faith, and as you do this, the Holy Spirit will give you words and phrases supernaturally in other tongues. Now the Lord can do anything He chooses to do, but it is a common misunderstanding that the Holy Spirit will always take over the control of your mouth and cause you to speak. However, in most cases, you will have to step out in faith first and release your voice, and then the Holy Spirit will cause His words to form in your mouth. *(Act.2:4) And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.* Do not be concerned about what the words you speak sound like, because this language you are speaking is not coming from your intellect and the words are according to *(1Co.13:1) ... the tongues of men and of angels*, so there are many that you have never heard. You are sounding your voice in faith, and the Spirit will cause you to form the words that you will speak. What you are

saying does not have to make sense to you.

You are not trying to speak in your native language or any other language you know, because when you do, your intellect and doctrines get involved and it is not a pure prayer. The Spirit prefers to speak in another language so your intellect does not pollute the words. ***(Rom 8:26) And in like manner the Spirit also helps our infirmity: for we do not know how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*** As you allow your voice to come out of your mouth and form the words that are supernaturally coming to you, you are entering into “God’s good works” that are mentioned in His Word. ***(Jas.2:17) Even so faith, if it does not have works, is dead in itself. (18) Yes, a man will say, You have faith, and I have works: show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith.***

Praying in tongues is an act of faith. Anytime we agree with God through the confessions of our mouth, it is considered an act of our faith. We confess the good report of what God says, instead of agreeing with the circumstances or symptoms of what we see, hear, and feel in the natural. This is the simplest way to enter into the “good works” of God that He has purposed for us. When we pray

in the Spirit, we are speaking the Will of God by faith, therefore we are carrying out the “good works” of God. *(Eph.2:10) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

Jesus said, *(Joh.5:19) ... The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father doing...* It is the same for us. We can do nothing out of our own intelligence or ability that has any real worth to God. The Spirit knows the Mind and Will of God. *(1Co.2:11) For who among men knows the things of a man, except the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knows, except the Spirit of God. (12) But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us by God. (13) Which things also we speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches, but which the Spirit teaches; combining spiritual things with spiritual words.* This perfectly describes praying in the Spirit. Even when we do not know how to pray for a situation, we can pray in the Spirit in tongues. When the Spirit prays through us, He prays according to the Father’s Will, so we can be confident that we are praying a perfect prayer, free of carnal thoughts and opinions, therefore it will be answered!

He will give us the words, or the answers, or whatever we need for that time. (*Rom. 8:26*) ***And in like manner the Spirit also helps our infirmity: for we do not know how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; (27) and he who searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to [the will] of God.*** This truly is one of the most incredible promises in all of Scripture! To know that, no matter where we are or what our circumstances are, we can call out to the Lord by praying in the Spirit and He will answer that prayer because it is according to His Will! (*Jer. 33:3*) ***Call to me, and I will answer you, and will show you great things, and difficult, which you do not know.*** The Lord deposits His thoughts and intents directly into the spirit of a man, bypassing his natural mind, and then causes him to speak it out in a tongue.

(1Co. 14:2) For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no man understands; but in the spirit he speaks mysteries. There are many accounts of men who were praying in the Spirit in their own homes when suddenly, they were given divine orders from God in a vision. Others have seen visions in which they were preaching to groups of people, or congregations of churches, or

were involved in spiritual warfare in different parts of the world. Still in other accounts of praying in the Spirit, men were actually translated to another location where they were used by God to directly minister to the needs of the people in that place, and then they were brought back home. There are multiple accounts in the Bible of people being moved from one location to another in supernatural ways (Genesis 5:24; 2 Kings 2:1; Luke 4:9,29-30; Acts 8:39-40).

There are times when we feel discouraged and beaten down by our circumstances, or just feel weak and in need of strength and endurance. The Word says that we have been given the benefit of being able to minister to ourselves as we pray in the Spirit. ***(Jud. 1:20) But you, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.*** Praying in the Spirit brings us into “the rest,” that point where we stop trying to rely on our own strength and ability to overcome. ***(Isa. 28:11) No, but by [men] of strange lips and with another tongue he will speak to this people; (12) to whom he said, This is the rest, give rest to him who is weary; and this is the***

refreshing: yet they would not hear. This is a spiritual rest in which we put our trust completely in the Lord, and He takes care of all our needs

(Hebrews 4:1). It is in these times that He gives to us His supernatural strength and endurance as well. ***(Isa. 40:31) But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.*** We need to go to Him for everything. He is our Power Supply!

The spiritual gifts available to those who have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit are each designed to address the needs of the body of Christ. In his first letter to the Corinthians, apostle Paul encouraged the brethren to desire spiritual gifts, but especially that they would prophesy. He explained differences between speaking in tongues and prophesying, and also the importance of edifying the church. To “edify” means to “build-up.” Paul made sure that those early Christians made it a priority to build-up one another whenever possible, and always in a peaceful, orderly fashion. ***(1Co. 14:1) Follow after love; yet desire earnestly spiritual [gifts,] but rather that you may prophesy. (2) For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no man understands; but in the spirit he speaks mysteries. (3) But he who prophesies speaks to men edification, and exhortation, and consolation.***

“Prophecy” is the supernatural ability given to a

believer to speak to others according to the Heart and Will of God. This prophecy will always agree with the Word of God, edify His people, and bring glory and honor to Jesus. **(Rev.19:10) ... For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.** Edifying through prophesy can range from a simple word of encouragement to a confirmation for a particular revelation a person has received. An exhortation from God that we receive through prophecy can be a warning of things to come, or it may be His guidance and direction to act according to the wisdom of God. Another possible benefit that we can receive through prophecy is God's consolation of our pain or anguish in times of trial and adversity.

Note that Paul encourages everyone to both speak in tongues and prophesy. We all need to edify ourselves by praying in tongues. However, when someone speaks in a tongue, unless it is interpreted, those who are listening will not understand what is being said. When a person prophesies, he is using words that others can understand. When being prophesied to, the people that are listening can receive the words with understanding and can grow and mature spiritually. **(1Co.14:4) He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but he who prophesies edifies the church. (5) Now I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that you should prophesy: and**

greater is he who prophesies than he who speaks with tongues, unless he interprets, that the church may receive edification. (6) But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching?

The gift of interpretation is so that those who are listening may understand what is being said.

Of course, people are allowed to pray in tongues without interpretation when it is just between themselves and God, but those listening in a group setting benefit greatly from hearing God's wisdom in the form of revelations, teachings, or prophecy. ***(1Co.14:7) Even things without life, giving a voice, whether pipe or harp, if they do not give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? (8) For if the trumpet gives an uncertain voice, who shall prepare himself for war? (9) So also you, unless you utter by the tongue speech easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for you will be speaking into the air.***

Those who are listening need to be able to understand what is being said, and so Paul encourages the brethren to seek the gift of interpretation of tongues. This gift gives supernatural understanding of what has been spoken in an unknown language. The

person with this gift then shares this understanding with others in words they can understand. Paul says interpretation of tongues is equal to prophecy when it is shared with the body.

Paul also mentions singing in the Spirit. This truly blesses the Lord and is a wonderful way to praise Him! Paul encourages the brethren to both pray in the Spirit, and to pray with their understanding, to sing in the Spirit, and to sing with their understanding, because both our spirit and our mind need building-up. *(1Co.14:13) Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. (14) For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. (15) What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. (16) Otherwise if you bless with the spirit, how shall he who fills the place of the unlearned say the Amen at your giving of thanks, seeing he does not know what you say?*

On Pentecost, when the disciples spoke in tongues that were earthly languages from other parts of the world, men who were from those places heard them and understood what was being said. These men were completely amazed because they knew those

disciples did not know how to speak these languages. This is why Paul said that tongues are for a sign to unbelievers, because it impresses them, especially if they hear their native language being spoken. ***(1Co.14:22) Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to the unbelieving: but prophesying [is for a sign,] not to the unbelieving, but to those who believe.***

The gift of prophecy has the potential to impress anyone who hears because it is spoken in words they can understand. ***(1Co.14:23) If therefore the whole church is assembled together and all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned or unbelieving, will they not say that you are mad? (24) But if all prophesy, and there comes in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reprov'd by all, he is judged by all; (25) the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed.*** Paul is stating here that if a visitor comes in when you are gathered together and hears people speaking only in tongues, they will not understand what is being said and, therefore, will not be able to act on anything that was spoken. However, if they hear prophetic utterances from the Lord through His people, they will take notice, especially if it addresses anything having to do with their personal

lives that no one else there would know about. This will impress them!

Paul encourages the body of believers to come together in unity and flow in the gifts of the Spirit, but in an orderly manner with edification of the body as its objective. ***(1Co.14:26) What is it then, brethren? When you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done to edification. (27) If any man speaks in a tongue, [let it be] by two, or at the most three, and [that] in turn; and let one interpret: (28) but if there is no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.*** Again, Paul is not saying that people cannot pray in the Spirit between themselves and God while in the group setting. It is perfectly fine to be praying in the Spirit while at church if you are praying to God with your prayer language.

When a person feels led by the Spirit to address the congregation in tongues with a message from God, Paul says there needs to be an interpreter present so that everyone will understand what was spoken to them by God. If a person delivers a message in tongues to the congregation and no one steps-up to interpret what was spoken, the person

who spoke the message in tongues has not sinned, but without someone to interpret, the message will not be understood by the congregation. Paul is saying that it is useless for anyone to address the congregation in a tongue without someone to interpret. In such a situation, no one should continue to address the congregation in tongues but just go back to praying to God in his own prayer language. Also prayer for interpretation is in order. *(1Co.14:13) Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.*

(1Co.14:29) And let the prophets speak [by] two or three, and let the others discern. (30) But if a revelation is made to another sitting by, let the first keep silence. (31) For you all can prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be exhorted; (32) and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets; (33) for God is not [a God] of confusion, but of peace. Paul makes it clear that all prophecies are to be given in an orderly fashion, and that their prophecies are to be judged by the other prophets who are present, to determine whether they follow biblical standards. Those who prophesy are not usually prophets, for that is an overseer's office in the five-fold ministry. Those who are prophets are held to a higher standard than those who merely prophesy. If they are true prophets ordained by

God, they will judge rightly. This way, the Lord holds His leadership accountable and protects His body against those attempting to use prophecy as a means of control for personal gain. No one person can force a body of believers to submit to his or her own selfish agendas if these biblical guidelines are followed.

(1Th.5:19) Do not quench the Spirit; (20) Do not despise prophesyings; (21) prove all things; hold fast that which is good; (22) abstain from every form of evil. The gift of prophecy is extremely valuable to the body of Christ, especially in these days. We are in need of His guidance and direction daily, so it is in our best interest not to quench, that is, “suppress,” His Spirit, but to stay in tune with what He is speaking through His prophets.

(1Co.12:11) But all these works the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one individually even as he wills. (12) For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. (13) For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. It is God’s plan to bring His people to maturity, and the way He accomplishes this is through His ministers.

They are those that have been raised up through sanctification of the Word and the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. We cannot expect to give away anything that we ourselves do not have. It is only when we have sown the Word in our hearts and been filled with His Spirit and clothed with His Power, that we are able to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth.

It is the Lord Who equips us for the work and we must wait with patience until we are sent by Him.

We must allow the Holy Spirit to work in us, to transform us from the inside out with the Nature, Character, and Authority of the Lord Jesus. He is raising up His corporate leadership, and they in turn will equip the body of Christ and prepare it for the days to come. ***(Eph.4:11) And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (12) for the perfecting of the saints, to the work of ministering, to the building up of the body of Christ*** (Notice that God ordained that the five-fold ministry of many gifted ministers are to lead the Church. ***{Pro.11:14} ... In the multitude of counsellors there is safety.*** This will bring the maturity of Christ in the body.): ***(13) till we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of***

God, to a full-grown man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: (14) that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; (15) but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ; (16) from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplies, according to the working in due measure of each separate part, makes the increase of the body to the building up of itself in love.

The Nature and Character of Christ is a Requirement

As believers, we are commanded to earnestly desire spiritual gifts. The Greek word for the gift of the Spirit is “charisma,” defined as a “gift of grace which divinely empowers a believer to share God’s work with others; Spirit-empowered service to the church to carry out His plan for His people.” A gift of grace is “undeserved favor” given freely by the Holy Spirit to a person of His choosing. We cannot work to earn these gifts, but if we “earnestly desire” them, our actions will prove that we consider them to be valuable. (*Mat. 6:21*) ***For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*** It is a true privilege to be used by the Holy Spirit as His chosen vessel of honor, with the purpose of bringing glory and adoration to our Lord, Savior, and King. But just as we would not choose to drink out of a cup that has been tainted with sewage, He will not choose to use us as a “vessel” that is tainted with sin and fleshly

deeds. (2Co.7:1) *Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

The Word is very clear about what God calls sin. (Gal.5:19) *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these]: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies, (21) envyings, drunkenness, revelings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I forewarned you, that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* If we have sin in our life, we need to confess it, repent of it, and believe the Word. The Word of God gives us the power to turn away from sin and the deeds of the flesh, and to be sanctified and set apart for His good purposes.

We are to represent the Lord in all we do, so we need to reflect His Nature, Character, and Authority. We need to spend time in His Presence by daily prayer and meditation on His Word, and by asking the Holy Spirit to give us His revelation of it. As a result, He is then able to drive it deep into our hearts. We must give Jesus Lordship over everything in our lives. He has the right to tell us what to do and what

not to do, and as we obey Him, we will be changed from the inside out. We will see His reflection in the mirror, and so will others! ***(2Co.3:18) But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.*** As we change, our focus and motivations change as well. We are no longer interested in drawing attention to ourselves because we want to glorify and exalt the Lord. We worship Him daily, not only in song and in prayer, but by laying down our own wants and desires before Him and allowing Him to do as He wills with our life.

Our nature and character are very important to the Lord. ***(1Jn2:6) He who says he abides in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked.*** The fruits of the Spirit are a true reflection of His Nature and Character. ***(Gal.5:22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) meekness, self-control; against such there is no law.*** All of these are founded in love.

The Bible says that God is Love (1 John 4:16), and that His people will be known by their love (John 13:34).

There is no better definition of love on this earth than this. (1Co.13:1) *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. (2) And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. (3) And if I give all my goods to feed [the poor], and if I give my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. (4) Love suffers long, [and] is kind; love does not envy; love does not boast, is not puffed up, (5) does not behave itself unseemly, does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take account of evil; (6) does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; (7) bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.* We may be operating in the spiritual gifts, but without embodying the standard of love described here, it means nothing. The selfless servant of the Lord is humble and meek, and has no interest in receiving recognition or personal gain.

The Lord wants the world to see His Power and personally experience His Love in a deep and transforming way. The powerful gifts of the Spirit are resources for the people of God to use when there is a need. The Holy Spirit has a complete understanding of any situation from beginning to

end and knows exactly what is needed to accomplish His objectives. He chooses a person or group of people to be used in each situation, depending on the combination of spiritual gifts He has given to them and the character traits they possess, and uses them like tools in a toolbox. Each tool has a specific purpose, and is used to accomplish His desired result. We must be sensitive to His leading as we see the needs around us.

Ultimately, every gift of the Spirit is used to build-up and unify the body of Christ. The gifts bring glory and honor to Jesus. They reveal and confirm the Good News of what He accomplished for us all at the Cross. ***(Mar. 16:20) And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen.*** As believers, we are called to walk in the fullness of Christ, and the only way that this can happen is if we are filled with the Holy Spirit. He was given to us on the day of Pentecost. Simply ask the Lord to receive the baptism of His Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues, and He will give it to you! Believe that you have received it, and you shall have it! Be blessed in the Name of Jesus!

