

GOT GIFTS?

Operating in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

This morning our goal is to learn the parameters that the Apostle Paul laid out in his epistles to the Romans, and the Corinthians churches.

There is a very evident thought pattern that Paul lays out in each of the letters. We need to be diligent to see what he says before teaching on the gifts and what he says after he teaches on the gifts.

I'd like to read 2 Scriptures first:

Luke 11:13 NKJV If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

Acts 2:38 NKJV Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

In the 1st verse, Jesus implies that the Holy Spirit is the incomparable gift given by the Father. Peter states the same thing only makes it even clearer.

He is a gift but never forget that He is a Person. This Person is God who brings Spiritual Gifts to whomever He pleases.

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We're going to start in Romans chapter 12:

Romans 12:1-5 NKJV I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. (2) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (3) For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, **not to think of himself more highly** than he ought to think, but to think soberly, **as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.** (4) For as we have many members in one body, but **all the members do not have the same function,** (5) so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, **and individually members of one another.**

These verses speak of spiritual maturity – whereby we are living a worshipful, sacrificial life. A life where we walk in humility among other believers. A life where we know it is not our gifts nor our talents But His! A life where we are all united in a mysterious “organism” called the Body of Christ. We have various “functions” and none is more important than any other – except perhaps the Head – who is Christ Jesus!

(Romans 12:6 NKJV) Having then **gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,** *let us use them:* if prophecy, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; (7) or ministry, *let us use it* in our ministering; he who

teaches, in teaching; (8) he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Our Gifts are from the Spirit of Grace! Paul assumes that we all have gifts. They may be different than others have, but he seems to be saying “use what God, in His Grace, has given you. Use it and use it well -- generously without holding back; Perhaps Paul is also saying use what God has given you without having a covetous eye on another gift that you have not been given!

(Romans 12:9 NKJV) **Let love be without hypocrisy.** Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. (10) *Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;* (11) *not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;* (12) *rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;* (13) *distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.* (14) *Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.* (15) *Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.* (16) **Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.**

Remember when I said that there was some intentional thoughts before and after Paul mentioned the spiritual gifts? The gifts Paul listed (prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, mercy) are wrapped up in humility and honest, truth-filled love. The wrapping is infused with patience, joy, unity, prayer and wisdom. This kind of wrapping is not to be torn off but rather, like a friend of ours, gently removes it because somehow the wrapping is as important as the gift it holds.

The next Scriptures we’re going to examine are in 1 Corinthians 12, 13 and 14. This is Paul’s heart and mind on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and their proper use;

The Corinthians had lots of problems: divisions, unacceptable behaviors and especially pride. Those who were prideful made others feel inadequate or less spiritual. These issues were prevalent in the area of spiritual gifts.

(1 Corinthians 12:1 NKJV) Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I do not want you to be **ignorant** (agoneho).

(1 Corinthians 12:2 NKJV) You know that you were Gentiles, **carried away to these dumb idols**, however you were led. (3) Therefore, I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

Paul reminds them where they came from, **not** they were **no** longer Gentiles, but rather no longer pagans who once called Jesus accursed by the spirit of the enemies of God embodied by their idols. Pagans were very superstitious which has no place in the exercise of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Commentator Gordan Fee wrote:

The presence of the Spirit in power and gifts makes it easy for God’s people to think of the power and gifts as the real evidence of the Spirit’s presence. Not so for Paul. **The ultimate criterion of the Spirit’s activity is the exaltation of Jesus as Lord.** Whatever takes away from

that, even if they be legitimate expressions of the Spirit, begins to move away from Christ to a more pagan fascination with spiritual activity as an end in itself.

So, Paul sets out to teach, correct and encourage the church in the gifts:

(1 Corinthians 12:4 NKJV) There are **diversities of gifts**, but the **same Spirit**. (5) There are **differences of ministries**, but the **same Lord**. (6) And there are **diversities of activities**, but it is the **same God** who works all in all.

Just because there are different gifts, ministries and activities, our Lord God is the same Lord and God who does the work in us! It is also a reminder of where our focus is to be: On Jesus!

Paul also uses 2 words: 1) **ministries**: in the context of the Scriptures this refers to “gifted offices” such as apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers. 2) **activities**: is the English word for the Greek that means energy (energemata). It refers to the working of miracles in which “God displays and pours out His miraculous power” in different ways, but it is always the same God doing the work.

1 Corinthians 12:7 NKJV) **But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: (8)** for to one is given the word of wisdom through the **Spirit**, to another the word of knowledge through the **same Spirit**, (9) to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the **same Spirit**, (10) to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another *different kinds of tongues*, to another the **interpretation** of tongues.

Manifestation of the Spirit is another way of saying “Gifts”. Some gifts are “ministries” and some are “activities”. In other places, Paul refers to these as “administrations” (ministries) and operations (activities).

The Spirit is with us and in us at all times. He’s not MORE present when the gifts are given; You can’t have more than 100% of Him. However, He may make Himself more apparent when He manifests the gift in you.

BUT don’t miss the point: each is given by the Holy Spirit for the benefit of ALL! Not for “showing off” but for His Glory! Not for the benefit of the person manifesting the Gift but for others.

(1 Corinthians 12:11 NKJV) But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually **as He wills**. (12) For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also *is* Christ. (13) For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

It is the Holy Spirit who works all these things. And most importantly, He distributes to each one individually as HE WILL. We still must receive them by faith. And Paul clearly teaches that there must be unity because we are all part of one body! And as he said several times there is ONE SPIRIT! Pagans had “gods” or “spirits” for everything!

(1 Corinthians 12:14 NKJV) For in fact the body is not one member but many. (15) If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? (16) And if the ear should

say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? (17) If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would be* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *would be* the smelling? (18) **But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.**

(19) And if they *were* all one member, where *would* the body *be*? (20) But now indeed *there are* many members, yet one body. (21) And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor gain the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." (22) **No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. (23) And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, (24) but our presentable parts have no need.** But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that *part* which lacks it, (25) that there should be **no schism** in the body, but *that* the members should have the same care for one another. (26) **And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.**

Verse 23 continues with the analogy. The idea of more or less honorable parts of our body, while perhaps treated that way in the physical body, God overrules our feelings of dishonor as gives honor to those people that the body ignores as shameful or less honorable because of their station in life. The spiritual unity we are to have is so deep that if one member of the body suffers, we all suffer and if a member is honored we are to rejoice together without jealousy or pettiness!

(1 Corinthians 12:27 NKJV) Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. (28) And God has **appointed** these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, **varieties of tongues.**

Paul delineates a God-given order of these Gifts in the body.

Apostles were, in the beginning, persons who had 1st hand knowledge of the resurrection of Jesus so that they could be a true witness. Prophets were persons who spoke for God. Then he continues the list with teachers, persons gifted with miracles, healings, helps, administration and finally different kinds of tongues. As we dig into Chapters 13 and 14, it may be more obvious why "tongues" is last. As a pastor, I can easily see why "helps" and administrations are listed before tongues. The person gifted with Helps is the type that sees a need and handles it quickly and cheerfully. He bends over backwards and never expects anything in return! Those gifted in administrations (another translation is "leadership" are those persons gifted to lead and guide the church body.

David Guzik comments:

In this sense of laying a foundation of supremely authoritative revelation for all God's people, there are no more **apostles** or **prophets** today. The foundation is already set. In a *lesser* sense there **may be apostles and prophets today**, but not in the sense Paul means here.

(1 Corinthians 12:29 NKJV) Are all apostles? *Are* all prophets? *Are* all teachers? *Are* all workers of miracles? (30) Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

Paul is hammering the point home that there should be no disunity within the body over the Gifts or their manifestation. Not everyone has the same gifts!

(1 Corinthians 12:31 NKJV) But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

You should earnestly desire the best gifts but given what Paul has said in the last 30 verses, don't be disappointed with the one(s) God has given you!

Always keep at the forefront of your heart and mind the True Gift of God:

Joh 4:10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have **given you living water.**"

Act 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive **the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

Chapter 13 is all about the more excellent way!

(1 Corinthians 13:1 NKJV) **Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels**, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. (2) And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. (3) And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

The issue of Tongues as articulated by Guzik is

The Greek word translated **tongues** has the simple idea of “languages” in some places ([Act 2:11](#), [Rev 5:9](#)). This has led some to say the gift of **tongues** is simply the ability to communicate the gospel in other languages; it is the capability of learning languages quickly. **But the way tongues is used here shows it can, and usually does, refer to a supernatural language by which a believer communicates to God.** There is no other way the reference to **tongues of . . . angels** can be understood.

And He continues to reference Adam Clarke's commentary:

In Paul's day, many Jews believe angels had their own language, and by the Spirit, one could speak it. The reference to **tongues of . . . angels** shows that though the genuine gift of tongues is a legitimate language, it may not be a “living” human language, or may not be a human language at all. Apparently, there are angelic languages men can speak by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

But the point of this paragraph is Love:

We need to understand the type of love Paul is referencing here. Greek has 4 types or words for Love:

1. Eros – sexual love; we get our word ‘erotic’ from this word.
2. Storge – this is family love as between parent and child.
3. Phillia – this is brotherly love and affection; it is a deep friendship or partnership kind of love.
4. Agape – this is love that doesn't change at every whim; it doesn't expect anything in return. Some define it as “God's Love” but that's not right: that's because agape is also used for the kind of love that loves sin or the world (remember 1 John). But it is sacrificial; This is not all emotion but rather a love that is shown by commitment and an act of our will for the sake of another.

So Paul points out without agape love, none of the gifts really matter or worse, cause more problems than perhaps was intended. Love is the more excellent way!

(1 Corinthians 13:4 NKJV) Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; (5) does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; (6) does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; (7) bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (8) Love never fails. But whether *there are* prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away. (9) For we know **in part** and we prophesy **in part**. (10) But when that **which is perfect has come**, then that which is in part will be done away.

Many more conservative theologians and pastors say “that which is perfect has come” means the NT. But that interpretation is based on the presupposition that all or nearly all of the gifts are no longer operative today.

We know that Jesus is the Perfect One to Come.

(1 Corinthians 13:11 NKJV) When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. (12) For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know **in part**, but then I shall know just as I also am known. (13) And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.

Can you see how Paul, once again has insisted that the manifestation of the Gifts is built on Love, given in Love, to be used with Love and for the benefit of others in the body, not for selfish gain?

The Corinthians had many issues in the church; when it came to the Gifts of the Spirit, they seemed to desire the more “flashier” of the ones that the Spirit was giving. They envied others’ gifts and with all this contention they split into cliques – and the unity of the church was nearly destroyed.

Paul believed that Prophecy should be desired more. He states why by contrasting two of the Gifts: Prophecy and Tongues.

(1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV) Pursue love, and desire spiritual *gifts*, but **especially that you may prophesy**.

What comes first? LOVE! Pursue Love in your desire for the Gifts, especially for prophecy. Why? Keep reading!

(1 Corinthians 14:2 NKJV) **For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands *him*; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.**

This is the most definitive explanation of Tongues as a “prayer language”. It is used to communicate with God – not man; many language experts have declared that speaking in tongues is just gibberish and not a real language; But Paul clearly says here that the person is speaking mysteries therefore they wouldn’t sound like our language.

(1 Corinthians 14:3 NKJV) But he who prophesies speaks **edification** and **exhortation** and **comfort** to men.

1. **Edification**: According to Vines dictionary, the Greek word means the act of building a home. Figuratively it means to “build up” the body of believers into spiritual maturity.
2. **Exhortation** means “to take a person aside to speak to him about some issue”. It may be to admonish or to urge him into a better course of conduct. But, in the church body, this word means “encouragement”!
3. **Comfort**: primarily “a speaking closely to anyone” therefore denotes “consolation, comfort,” with a greater degree of tenderness. It helps bear the load that a person is carrying.

(1 Corinthians 14:4 NKJV) **He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.**

This is why Paul values prophecy over tongues: prophecy is for the building up of the whole church! Tongues is for building up your devotional life.

(1 Corinthians 14:5 NKJV) I wish you all spoke with tongues, **but even more** that you prophesied; **for he who**

prophesies *is* greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

There was something special about speaking in tongues TO GOD. Without understanding the words themselves, Paul was able to pray, to praise and even intercede in a manner that was beyond his “natural” ability to articulate these things in his native language. This is a great blessing! One that all believers should pursue.

However, prophesying is “greater” because of its impact on the church; the manifestation of tongues in a church that is like the Corinthian church would be disruptive and unedifying because they were doing it without proper motivation! LOVE!

Paul uses the word “wish” here because he knows that not everyone speaks in tongues because the giving of the gift is up to God the Holy Spirit! Does this mean that you cannot be edified during prayer, praising and interceding with your natural language? Of course not!

(1 Corinthians 14:6 NKJV) But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?

In the church, without interpretation, tongues do not benefit others. But, in the language known by those in the Church, if someone has a revelation, or a word of knowledge, a word of prophesy or teaches, these benefits everyone.

(1 Corinthians 14:7 NKJV) Even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played? (8) For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?

(9) So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

Paul is drawing a picture of how praying in tongues would be like someone playing an instrument without knowing how...it just be noise. Tongues would be the same: noise made in the air instead of in the hearts and minds of those listening.

(1 Corinthians 14:10 NKJV) There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them *is* without significance. (11) Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks *will be* a foreigner to me.

Paul draws another picture – use of different human languages. When we don’t know that language, how will we communicate?

So, if there must be tongues spoken in the church, there **must** be interpretation, so there can be edification.

But, since tongues is used to speak with God, He understands even though no one understands it himself.

(1 Corinthians 14:12 NKJV) Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual *gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.*

(1 Corinthians 14:13 NKJV) **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 *the conclusion* then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding. **(16)** Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say?

Paul encourages those with the gift of tongues to pray that he is giving the interpretation himself - even praying or singing in tongues to himself but then speaking the interpretation to the body. Otherwise, Paul says, how can anyone even utter Amen if he does not know what is being said! How can anyone agree with your blessing and praise to God if they don't receive the interpretation and therefore can say "So be it".

Paul here makes reference to how we can **sing in the spirit**. God can give us the freedom to exercise the gift of tongues in a melodic way, so it flows with worship. However, based on the principles in this chapter, if this is done it should never be done in a way that would draw attention to itself or distract others.

Paul is also inferring that the operation of this gift is still under his control. He decides whether to exercise the gift or not.

(1 Corinthians 14:17 NKJV) For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified. **(18) I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all; (19) yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.**

It was better to bless others with his native tongue unless he knew for certain the interpretation would be given.

(1 Corinthians 14:20 NKJV) Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.

"In malice be babes" means don't be evil but like a child, be innocent and harmless; tenderhearted and forgiving. But with understanding, be mature exhibiting wisdom and sincerity and uprightness.

1 Corinthians 14:21 NKJV) In the law it is written: "WITH MEN OF OTHER TONGUES AND OTHER LIPS I WILL SPEAK TO THIS PEOPLE; AND YET, FOR ALL THAT, THEY WILL NOT HEAR ME," says the Lord. **(22) Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.**

[Isa 28:11-12](#) is quoted here. Isaiah said that if the people of Israel refused to hear the words of the prophets in Hebrew, then they **would** hear it from foreigners whose language they didn't understand either! It became a sign to the unbelieving Jews that there would come invaders who they didn't understand either...and it would not be a benefit but a curse!

(1 Corinthians 14:23 NKJV) Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, **and all speak with**

tongues, and there come in *those who are uninformed or unbelievers*, will they not say that you are out of your mind? (24) **But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all.** (25) And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on *his* face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.

Paul is indicating that there must be order in the church and not confusion. And in an orderly manner, if an unbeliever or new believer comes in, prophesy can pierce his/her heart and will worship God with you!

(26) How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. **Let all things be done for edification.** (27) If anyone speaks in a tongue, *let there be* two or at the most three, *each* in turn, **and let one interpret.** (28) **But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God.**

The “all things be done for edification” – not just for me – but our desire is for the building up of others. Spurgeon doesn’t have anything nice to say about those who come to church for just themselves. He has been quoted saying “Spiritual self indulgence is a monstrous evil” speaking of those who come just to have their own souls fed!

Paul also puts limits on tongues in a church setting but does not prohibit it. The point is, don’t make the gift of tongues the focus at church meetings. He wants it done in an orderly manner (each in turn); AND, there must be interpretations!

if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God. This is to remind us the audience for the gift of tongues is GOD not men. It also teaches us that we are in control of the gift!

(1 Corinthians 14:29 NKJV) Let two or three prophets speak, and **let the others judge.** (30) But if *anything* is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. (31) **For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.** (32) **And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.** (33) **For God is not *the author* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints**

Again, Paul gives us instructions regarding the Gift of Prophecy: Not many should speak; others can judge their prophetic word. Remember what John said in As John said in [1Jn 4:1?](#)

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

If multiple people speak, let it be one by one so that ALL can be encouraged! Nothing prophesized can ever go against the Word of God!!!

And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

Essentially this means that the person speaking a prophesy is also capable of controlling himself. They might be inspired to speak but it’s under their control. In other words, there is no need of disorder.

The Holy Spirit does not take control like a demon does in demonic possession!

Paul concludes this entire discussion with 3 thoughts:

(1 Corinthians 14:39 NKJV) Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues.

(1 Corinthians 14:40 NKJV) Let all things be done decently and in order.

Paul was very straightforward in his instructions.

What about gifts today? And what about gifts in the church?

I personally believe that all of the gifts are in operation today. I say this because scripture teaches it:

Mar 16:17-18 : And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.

This is Jesus speaking of those who would spread the Gospel. He didn't put any time constraints on it!

Acts 2:32-33 NKJV This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. **(33)** Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

Acts 2:39 NKJV For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

The reference to children and to those who are far off indicates a continuation in time and place of the promise of the Holy Spirit, including the gifts He bestows!

1Co 14:12 : Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel

Does the church no longer need to be edified?

Does the church no longer need miracles?

Does the church no longer need a prophetic word for the building up of the church?

Does the church no longer need leadership, teaching and shepherding?

Does the church body no longer need healings?

Does the church no longer need wisdom and knowledge?

Some divide up the gifts into "sign" gifts and "miraculous" gifts. But the scriptures make no distinction between them.

Some say that many (some say all) died out after the time of the apostles. But you would expect that

something so huge as the Holy Spirit no longer giving His Gifts would have been recorded somewhere in Scripture through a prophetic word!

Some ignore (or simply don't believe) reports of the Gifts being manifested throughout church history. For example,

The book "Like a mighty wind" by Mel Tari recounts the story of revival on the island of Timor (in Indonesia) in 1965. The book is filled with accounts of God's power to work miracles in modern times.

Some use 1 Corinthians 13:8 out of context:

1 Corinthians 13:8 NKJV (8) Love never fails. But whether *there are* prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away.

They either forget to use the next two verses or they do not apply correct interpretation to them:

1 Corinthians 13:9-10 NKJV (9) For we know in part and we prophesy in part. **(10)** But when that **which is perfect has come**, then that which is in part will be done away.

If God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, then so is God the Holy Spirit!

And what of CC Crossville?

I believe all of the gifts are active today. I also believe at everything done in our church services and bible studies be done in decency and order. How is that played out? All manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are to be done in love and for the purpose of building up the church. If you have a prophetic word from the Lord for this church during the service please write it down and give it to one of the elders. They will pass it on to me.

Because of all of the issues people have with tongues, I do not want them spoken aloud in church. I'm not trying to quench the Holy Spirit (although it might appear so), I have to consider those young in the Lord and those who do not understand this gift. However, in a small group setting where we are seeking the Lord in prayer, praise and worship, I think that the use of tongues is appropriate but only if there is interpretation. Otherwise it might give the appearance of spiritual-showing-off.

If while you are in prayer, and the Holy Spirit directs you to lay hands on someone for healing or for a prophetic word, be obedient.

And always, if He prompts you to be helpful in any given situation, cheerfully volunteer or even "go behind the scenes" to get something done without anyone knowing – God knows!!

Since everybody has some opinion on the gift of tongues, I will tell you that for me, it is a real gift that I use when I feel led. The context is always prayer.

The issue with it is that it's the only gift where people feel like they would be out of control. The truth is, the tongue is the last member of your body that you want to God to control. Remember, this isn't spiritual possession! You still have control. And it is always directed to God!

Why are these gifts important? Because the church cannot grow spiritually without them! Much of the world today is under the control or influence of Satan. The world is against us! The world tries to beat us down! The

gifts are meant to build us up into strong witnesses for our God and King! People want to be where God is! And God want us to take Him with us wherever we go! And not just to church...but out with our family and friends...and out into our community!