

GIFTS

By Rev. Chris Meier

All throughout the year people love getting gifts. We view the Christmas season as a gift-giving affair. We all love to celebrate the baby in the manger. The real gift was His death on the cross during what we celebrate as Easter. Without Christ's death there could be no gift of salvation.

There are a whole host of other gifts Father God gives to the church or body of Christ. Unless you happen to go to a church that teaches about these gifts and shows you how to function in them, you will probably miss many awesome experiences in your Christian walk. My first pastor taught about the gifts of the Holy Spirit seen in 1 Corinthians 12-14 in the context of 1 Corinthians 13. That chapter is called the "love" chapter by many in biblical Christianity. That's because what we term as the gifts of the Holy Spirit are to be shared in the body of Christ. They are for the body, and the real source of their reality is love. Jesus gave these gifts to His *Church* because of His great love for His bride, the *Church*. We share them with the body in a spirit of love from the Holy Spirit. There is no room in sharing these gifts where we are the "big" deal or the source of the gift. The Holy Spirit is the source and the motive is love.

Paul lists the nine gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12. In 1 Corinthians 14, he gives some parameters for how to function in them. It is in 1 Corinthians 13 that love is explained to us. Without reading that chapter first before any others, we miss the beauty of the gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12.

1 Corinthians 12:31: "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." What we call the New Testament are really letters or epistles to groups of believers who became first century churches. There are no chapters or verses. So 1 Corinthians 12:31, flows right into 1 Corinthians 13:

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 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, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”

The above passages were taken from the King James Version. Read them in any version you prefer. But when reading any translation, remember when you read the word *charity*, it is the word *love*. Maybe because functioning in the gifts can be a heady thing for some people, I can't be sure; but when we study the gifts in the context of the love of God, we realize how amazing that love truly is. We are humbled by Him and His love. I still struggle sometimes to understand God and His love for humanity. Without the biblical understanding of what God's love means, I would not really look at humanity and think LOVE! But when I read 1 Corinthians 13— I understand, to whatever extent the human mind can— God, His love, His way and His motives.

Some people are born with this ability to help people. They love doing it. Others, myself included, look at humanity and the last thing on our minds is, how can I help? The first thing on my mind when I look at humanity without the love of God is, these people are crazy! The next thought is, how can I run away? But the love of God constrains us, teaches us and infuses us. He shows us a piece of Himself when He teaches us about His love. So before we look at the list of gifts given by and through the Holy Spirit to Christ's people, the *Church*, read 1 Corinthians 13 at least two or more times to see what the Holy

Spirit may reveal to you about God's love. You may also want to review our prayer lesson about the Holy Spirit located on the Prayer Lesson Tab on this website.

The Gifts List

Everybody has a gift list when they go shopping. Well, in the case of the Bible, there are 28 gifts listed in Romans, 1 Corinthians and Ephesians. Some are listed as people given as gifts and other items are listed as spiritual gifts. All of them are classified as gifts of grace. In other words, we don't own them. We don't own healing or prophecies or pastors. We only flow in these things. We will be specifically studying only the gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12 & 14.

We must remember the context that the gifts are shared in the Bible. We can never divorce the gifts from the epistle or the people that they were written for. The church at Corinth was predominately filled with believers who had come out of a pagan lifestyle; as opposed to those at the church in Rome who were undoubtedly Jewish and living by The Law. The believers in Corinth had been in pagan temples where basically anything could happen— any manifestation of the demonic— and they lived formerly that way themselves. Paul must now teach them how to live and manifest God and His gifts to one another in a moral and holy way.

1 Corinthians 12:1-13 says this: “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame

Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

As you can read, there are nine gifts:

Revelatory: Word of Wisdom
Word of Knowledge
Discernment of Spirits
Power: Faith
Gifts of Healing
Miraculous Powers
Word: Prophecy
Different Tongues
Interpretation of Tongues

Eight Parameters

It would seem from our reading that **1)**, You must be a believer in Jesus Christ, one who has asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior. **2)**, You should already be baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking with other tongues— although, that is not a prerequisite. **3)**, You should be in a place where other believers are so that one of these gifts listed may bless the body as a whole. **4)**, As we continue on in our reading through to chapter 13, it would seem that divisions, accusations, gossiping and giving people ‘special’ treatment in the gathering should not be done based upon our feelings of someone being more important than someone else. Conversely, Paul also exhorts us not to do these things because you view someone less importantly, i.e., you can get away with talking about them or sticking them in the back of the church (See 1 Corinthians 3).

5), In Chapter 13 it would seem that any attitude, hidden or exposed, that is not based upon love and concern for God’s people, as well as the gifts given by those people, should be held in suspect (See Philippians 2). **6)**, Likewise, those gifts that are not exercised by faith with hope should also be viewed cautiously (Romans 14:23). In other words, these are gifts of grace or

enablement. Any believer can move in them at any moment— even the newly saved. They are not owned nor given permanently to an individual. They are given to grace someone else or enable them and exhort and edify them. In order for us to function in them we are also given grace and enablement. We are not divine healers, God is. He gives us a specific gift at a moment in time to share with other believers. Now, because of our habit or function of use, as Paul says elsewhere, we may move in one gift more frequently than another. But these 1 Corinthians 12 & 14 gifts, or the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are not ours “permanently.”

7), There is a seventh parameter that is not quite said openly but is strongly implied and it is this: we are known to one another in the Body. For those of you that know me, you know I don't like to divorce the gifts or the subject matter discussed in the Scriptures from the books or chapters of the Bible that we find the subject matter in. Paul was writing to the Corinthians for a reason. There were things going on in Corinth that were different from let's say Ephesus or the church at Thessaloniki.

The people in Corinth were known to one another and to Paul and would know intimately why he wrote to them the way he did. Of course, this is why churches are exhorted not to forbid speaking. (When this course is taught at the church, notes from the commentary on the Greek concerning Paul's words “forbidding women to speak” as well as other highlights from the Greek are handed out. Obviously, that cannot be done here. I suggest you look for those commentaries on your own.) Here's a modern day example: Even if I am invited to speak in a church and the folks know me, I will run the gifts of the Spirit through the head of the meeting place first. In other words, if I am allowed to preach, I'll just preach, but if during the meeting the Lord wants me to pray for the sick or gives me a gift of prophesy, a gift of a word of knowledge or something else, I will most often have spoken with the leader of the congregation first to know how they view the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Quite often, leaders will give me an open invitation to do what the Holy Spirit says to. In those circumstances I do. But there have been times when they tell me how they want a meeting to go. In other words, we pray this long, sing this long and you're allowed to preach this long. Well, in those situations, I am not responsible for the day-to-day care of those sheep. I have

to defer to the leader in charge and ask them if what I'm sensing is okay. Even though I know God is telling me to prophesy or pray, I still need to function decently and in order and defer to the one the Holy Spirit has placed in charge with the care and feeding of those sheep. They know their sheep the best and are known of them—I am not. Likewise, I will not be judged if they forbid the gifts of the Holy Spirit in their churches from functioning. Nowhere are we told in the Bible to run roughshod over the pastor of a church in order to “share” a gift of the Holy Spirit when that leader forbids such a thing. Those matters should be taken up within that specific church hierarchy and the folks attending there, privately; not publicly to embarrass the leadership in an effort to force their hand.

Decently and in order is the key within the context of the Scripture references here. If someone is a member of a church that refuses the functioning of the gifts, then those members are espoused to Christ. They should go back to Jesus and find out if He still wants them in that church or wants them under the tutelage of another fivefold ministry (pastorate). In my own personal life story, I have had to leave certain congregations in order to move with Jesus in different areas of my life. It was painful when the Lord called us to leave, but we left with integrity, not taking other people out of the church. When asked by the leadership, we privately told them why and told them we would not be discussing it with anybody else. When other members asked us why we left, we didn't say why, we just said the Lord told us to and left it at that only, reinforcing that it was a private matter that had nothing to do with the leadership at that particular fellowship.

Let me exhort you not to stay in a church that doesn't allow the Holy Spirit to move miraculously and in power. This is part of your relationship with the Lord. These gifts are not meant as bling or frivolity. They are faith-building; they also further us along in our intimacy with our Elder Brother, Jesus, and with our Holy Father, God. We are now in a new family and things are done differently when we are reading our Bibles and following the Holy Spirit who resides on the inside of us. The gifts mentioned by Paul were important enough for the Holy Spirit to inspire him in writing about them and their application in sharing them with our fellow believers. Any church who refuses biblical mandates in this area is apostate. Nowhere are we told to attend apostate churches.

There is an eighth parameter and that is: **8**), These gifts also seem to work interdependently. In other words, quite often you will receive a gift of a word of knowledge and then receive a gift of a word of wisdom in how to apply that knowledge. You may receive a gift of a word of knowledge and then the Holy Spirit may give a gift of a word of prophecy that will let the person know what will happen in the future with that knowledge. Quite often a gift of faith works in conjunction with prophecy and miraculous signs and wonders (KJV). I have personally experienced a gift of faith rising up within me and then prophesied or spoken a provision for a situation that became quite miraculous. So frequently these gifts function together. They can function wherever believers are; where two or three are gathered, Jesus is in the midst.

Edify, Exhort and Comfort

No matter what type of church gathering we will discuss— and no matter what gift exercised, these eight parameters must be adhered to. When you follow or remember those eight parameters the gifts produce three effects. They edify, exhort and comfort. In this way the perfect judgment of God is seen and exercised and the body is built up. A quick language lesson on these three words used in 1 Corinthians 14:3 would be beneficial. While Paul uses them for the gift of prophesy only, after a thorough reading of these three chapters as a whole, I believe these three words can adhere to all these 1 Corinthian gifts when exercised.

Edify is the Greek word *oikodome*. It literally means to be a house builder or architect. Used here it means to confirm and build up and to be a steward or manage something appropriately. Exhort is the Greek word *paraklesis*. It means to implore, entreat and console. It comes from the Greek word *parakaleo*, which is the word we get for the Holy Spirit, which is one that comes along side and calls out loud. The understanding here is not necessarily that sweet ‘calling in the wind,’ but more of imploring someone very, very strongly. The last word is the word comfort or in Greek, *paramutheo*. Again we see the word to come alongside but it adds the dimension of doing it publicly and doing so while teaching or instructing, which is what produces the comfort. Our English word gives the idea of being sweet and tender, but that is not highlighted here, though it is not ignored. The Greek is much stronger. When the essences of the Greek words

are applied, I believe all the gifts given by God's word will produce these three effects.

Meetings of the Saints

Now let's look at the practices applied during the meetings. This is somewhat different from what the early church experienced. First of all they met in houses. For those Jewish believers living during the first 100 years they also attended synagogue, which was a much more formal gathering patterned after the necessities laid out in the Talmud for a meeting conducted outside the temple. For those living before the destruction of Herod's Temple, they would have followed The Law. Since our New Testament was written during the first 100 years, some aspects in conducting a meeting had to change. Living by and through the Holy Spirit has not changed. Living by the Holy Spirit produces the effect of sanctity in the Word and obeying the Ten Commandments. What has changed is following The Law, owning a woman or owning a slave. Thus the civil or legal requirements in effect when Paul wrote his books of not allowing a slave or a woman to be in charge or to speak would seem to imply that our meetings should be orderly, without people speaking up, except during times of gifts of prophecy or amens during the sermon and things of that nature.

The book of Corinthians seems to bear this out as Paul goes to great lengths to describe people taking turns in speaking and not talking on top of one another. Now, there are churches and congregations that will not allow women to speak at all. If you are attending this teaching, obviously, we have already taught you the error of strangling the Body of Christ as well as the history of woman in the early church functioning as apostles, pastors, evangelists, prophets and more. As long as God has called an individual, their gender, nationality or job is irrelevant. It's important to mention that the Holy Spirit is the one who places the saints where He wants them. There are different reasons why He wants one person in a position. There are certain climates and environments in different gatherings. In some experiences, it's obvious that satanic principalities are present. This was true of Corinth and Ephesus. These principalities give the people a certain 'attitude' or personality. This attitude is contrary to the mind and personality of Christ, but that fact is quite often hidden. The peoples' eyes are dulled and blocked from seeing truth.

In these types of meetings, a whole set of different rules apply. Deliverance must take place first before the gifts are exercised. In other gatherings where deliverance is not needed from demon interference, we must always remember not to go beyond what God is already doing and what He has already written (1 Corinthians 4:6). The human soul is a strong entity. It can very easily function on a psychic realm instead of by the Holy Spirit of God through His revelation. Curiosity usually sparks a psychic intent. Trying to spark interest or function in revelatory gifts where God is not functioning in them, can only open a door to the psychic realm. When Paul wrote the Corinthians he wrote concerning what was already taking place in their midst and gave them instructions about the proper way to conduct themselves in what God was already doing. You see the same pattern or attitude when he wrote to the Ephesians, Romans, Philippians and every other congregation that he wrote to. He blessed what God was already doing and gave them further instructions, which always upheld the mind of Christ and set up a blocked door for satanic involvement, though he had no problem in addressing what to do with satanic interference.

The human soul is always craving power, and in some cases, curiosity seeks ways to gain access to this power. What better way to appease this desire than to combine supernatural abilities with human gifts? That's why Paul told them to eagerly desire God's gifts, but he said so after he told them to follow the way of love. In fact, he combined the fullness of Godly love with the desire for spiritual gifts. I see no other way to function. The human soul (sometimes combined with demonic interference) will always try to taint the purity of Godly love with human feel-good emotion and desire, thereby blocking our motives and tainting God's gifts.

This is why so many gatherings place controls on the gifts, as my husband experienced at a meeting years ago. In this meeting the folks had to pass a word thru an elder first before it could be shared. At first glance passing a word through someone else seems safe. We'll soon talk about the meetings in which this might be necessary. I have already mentioned my pattern when I travel to preach. But this is really based on our 'fears' of being wrong. Pride is really at work here. Add to this mix the fact that some gatherings televise their meetings and you have a recipe for motivational pride becoming a stronghold over a whole congregation in which satan can block their future

effectiveness. What's a congregation to do, since we are all so human? Follow Paul's advice, combined with the fullness of Scriptural authority.

It seems to me that Paul was addressing a regular church meeting, and yet we must realize that they met in their homes. So whether the gathering is large or small, formal or informal, this is one of the weekly gatherings of your particular congregation. This would be where the people who are known to each other come to celebrate Jesus. They may do this through song, a Scripture reading, a gift of prophecy or a tongue with an interpretation. Some more formal gatherings plan these activities ahead of time. They know who will sing and speak and what Scripture reading they will share. On the other hand, I have attended somewhat larger gatherings (500 people or more) that were formal, weekly church meetings where the only thing planned was what the worship team/choir was going to sing and who was going to share a formal word for that meeting.

In some meetings I have been in, the Holy Spirit would plan who was to preach that Sunday before the service. As part of the leadership of the gathering, the three of us did not know who the Spirit would choose. It always amazed us how God would do this every Sunday and the word was always on target and fruitful. The parameters though were always the same. Two, or at the most three could speak, whether that was for preaching or a tongue and interpretation or a gift of prophecy. If you'll notice, the difference in Corinthians would seem to imply that tongues and interpretation is for the unbeliever and prophecy is for believers. In some of the churches I attended, the Lord would sovereignly give someone a Scripture reading along with these gifts.

Concerning gifts of prophecy, tongues and interpretations, the churches I was in that this worked the best was during worship. (See my teaching on Psalm 29.) The song leader would get a sensing from the Holy Spirit to wait on the Lord silently. Sometimes the gifts would manifest, sometimes the presence of God would fall and do His own work and then the singing would resume. I have been in other congregations in which this is done after the song service. That's fine if that is what the Holy Spirit is doing in your midst. What I have never seen in this environment is the need to go to the leader of the meeting with one of those gifts, unless it is a gift of a word of knowledge, wisdom or a discernment of spirits gift. Which, by the way is plural—the word 'spirits'

does not just apply to satanic. Most often in a church service it applies to what is going on with human spirits or what the Holy Spirit wishes to do in the service, outside the regular parameters of that church service. In this case going to the leader of the meeting is in order. In the case of tongues, interpretation, gifts of prophecy and spontaneous songs or Scripture reading, that is not necessary. Let me explain why.

Paul makes it clear that in the cases we discussed, two or at the most three speak. The others should sit and listen. There are those that teach that gifts of prophecy have no limit on numbers because of Verses 30-32. One might ask about large gatherings where there are many people, wouldn't you want to hear more and wouldn't you want to make sure that nothing improper is said? First of all, God can say what He needs to say with two or three, regardless of how many are in attendance. It has been my experience that when you let this rule slip, the targeted message of God becomes diluted, and sloppy. More words tend to take the meeting all over the place, while the central message is lost. The only difference in a larger gathering may be the need for a microphone to be centrally located for the congregants to use.

The next issue is one of faith. Listening and hearing and applying the word of God to its intended application takes faith. Remember our eight parameters? If you are known to the leadership in your congregation, and you are unsure of whether or not God is speaking to you, sit quiet and listen. I guarantee you that someone else will receive a similar word and share it. This way the next time God speaks to you, you can exercise your faith. Using people as controls or go-betweens to hear the word first, removes the saints from exercising their faith and sets up a platform for a controlling human spirit (soul) to take over. Since no more than two or three may speak, this should not take up a lot of time.

In one congregation I attended over 35 years ago, the pastor set up an added regulation and he used Deuteronomy 13:1-4; 2 Thessalonians 3:15 and 1 Corinthians 14:32-33 as the Scriptural applications. If you read these verses you will find them to be harsh. But if they are taught in their entirety and in context with conducting a New Testament meeting and applying love with the gifts, you will probably agree with the regulation I am about to explain to you. You had to be known to the congregation. If you got up and everyone listening felt you 'missed' it, you were quietly called into the pastor's office.

If you did it again, the same result took place, with more exhortation and possibly some counseling. If you did it a third time and missed it again, you were publicly admonished from the pulpit, right there in front of everybody and your right to publicly share a word in the congregation was removed until your words lined up to the word of God. Receiving your ability back to speak publicly was determined through various times of counseling with an elder or the pastor. Those individuals had to share all words through an elder until that time. These parameters were announced from the pulpit and everyone knew ahead of time that they existed.

In other words, just because someone didn't like what someone said and decided to apply this rule to certain people, could not be done. Trust me when I say, no one ever 'missed' it. I will also add that this was a very loving congregation. The love of God was deeply entrenched in the people. No one ever wanted to grieve the Holy Spirit with a 'missed' word. Some might view this as too harsh. Let me say this: it is Scriptural, it exposed human flesh and it put God, not people in control of judging whether a word was outright wrong. Also let me say that there were biblical principles already in place that the words were applied to that would define whether a word was biblical or not. It was not arbitrary or based on human interpretation, but it had to meet Scriptural definitions. In other words, they had to have the element of the 'canon of Scripture.' They had to be Christ-centered. There could not be factual inaccuracies, and lastly, they could never violate the written word. I have to admit that it was this congregation that formed a deep desire in me to know the targeted word of God.

Prayer Meetings

Let's briefly discuss prayer meetings. Some use the Old Testament temple system as a guideline for prayer in the New Testament. In all honesty, there really is not much difference between what governs a regular church meeting or a prayer meeting in the New Testament Scriptures. The reality is that gifts of prophecy or other words are not the center of attention, God is— and He has called a meeting to pray. The only other difference in many church prayer meetings is that the attendants and leadership will most likely pray in tongues out loud and since it is not the gift of tongues and interpretation, it should be in concert. In other words, no one should be so loud when speaking in their prayer language (tongues) that they are not in concert with the other

congregants praying in their prayer language. (We had already had a course on Worship and notes from our teaching of Hebrews 6:1-3. In it, they explained why the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is different from the tongues and interpretation mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12. You can look at the Prayer Lesson Tab on this website to understand the difference.)

For specific prayers, just pray. The attendants should be known to one another. If they are not, then someone should officiate with what people pray. I'm not sure that it helps to share how one arrived at knowing what to pray. In other words, a direct word or vision may have come from the Holy Spirit to tell you what to pray. Some leaders want to hear this; some don't and would rather that people just pray. If you are in a prayer meeting where the leader wants to hear about the words or revelations, I think the same two-or-three rule should apply, simply because the same problem can take place when too many words get involved. Instead of the targeted meeting that is a hallmark of being Holy Spirit-led, you get prayers about everything— including the kitchen sink! Of course, Scripture reading and a vision or dream would be in addition to the three others that might share a word. There is no limit on those, except, in my opinion, common sense. In some prayer meetings song is an integral part of the meeting and in others loud prayer and in others soft or silent meditation in prayer is a hallmark. There is Scripture to support all of the above, though there are far more verses and words supporting verbal prayer as opposed to prayer in song or silent meditation. (See the Archive Tab where there is a teaching on the 21 words translated in the Bible as prayer.)

As concerns prayer meetings, I think the most important question that should be asked is, why did the Holy Spirit call the meeting? Why has God asked you to pray? If you are just doing it because that's what you do every week, sooner or later you will run into trouble. Everything from controls to boredom can set in. Manifestations and other super spiritual occurrences must take place to replace the intensity of a Holy Spirit directed prayer meeting— and trust me, those meetings are just as noisy and full of activity as the real Holy Spirit-led meeting. Obviously, if only two or three are gathered together for prayer, it is enough; our Lord is in the midst. You may have more time to share individual needs for prayer than with 1,000 in attendance.

I believe it is crucial to know the people you are praying with. Unfortunately, that is not always possible. Let me relate an experience in which the gifts of

the Spirit took care of many in a meeting. Almost twenty years ago now, I had the honor of overseeing an early morning intercessory prayer session before a large conference took place with over 20,000 in attendance. I worked as a volunteer with another woman who was an elder and mother to many in the Lord. So even in this, the leadership of this ministry moved with integrity. Though we were both elders in Christ with well over 50 years of ministry between us, they still placed a younger saint with an older one.

Roughly 200 or more attendees came down before the platform to pray. Our job basically was to see that things were done decently and in order. We covered people with prayer clothes and basically asked the Lord to give us discernment if someone was not praying according to the Holy Spirit. No microphone or anything else was involved. Everyone just prayed together as a large group, individually. The elder stateswoman I was working with kept looking at one person in particular. She asked me to observe her. All seemed well. She was not nearly as loud as the others and she was not manifesting in a way that sent off any alarms to me. But my partner was still troubled. So we went over to her. There she was somewhat quiet on the floor, head down, praying. When my partner tried to get this woman's attention, instantly she became stiff as a board. That's when I knew we were in trouble. I picked up her head and looked into her eyes. Trust me when I say I was looking right into the eyes of demonic involvement. Well, suffice it to say we had to call for some help in removing her and sending her for deliverance.

I share this story because the gifts of the Spirit are interdependent. Just because the Lord didn't show it to me right away didn't mean I wasn't supposed to act on it. Just because no speaking was involved didn't mean we didn't have to have someone there overseeing or officiating. It may have seemed less important because it was before the conference, but following biblical guidelines are just as important no matter what kind of meeting it is.

Spirit of Might

There is one last application concerning tongues and interpretation that is very controversial in the Body of Christ, even to this day. I was first taught an aspect of this in a prophetic class from a pastor in our local church who went on to do some great things for the Body of Christ. I say that to show that it is not an isolated teaching, from some small corner of the earth. It is quite well

known as a teaching belonging in the Body of Christ. But there are large groups of well known Pentecostal churches that do not adhere to it and find it demonic. In a word concerning the demonic— anything, any teaching can be circumvented by demons, if you let them. This aspect of tongues and interpretation is no different.

It is the private interpretation that we who pray in tongues can move in personally, without being in a meeting where there is an interpreter present. I do not mean to say that while you are praying in tongues— through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the evidence of which, is speaking in tongues— there needs to be interpretation for every word. I once met a young lady who was struggling with demonic activity that was causing her to become quite mentally unstable. She related a story in which “something” was telling her to speak a word in a tongue and then interpret it. That is ridiculous and I believe it is demonic or can open someone up to influences that are not Godly. Unfortunately, in her case it had done just that.

In thinking about it and sitting before the Lord concerning this aspect of teaching, I have always felt that it must be shared in the context of mature believers who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking with other tongues for some period of time. Think about it: you have folks who are mystified already concerning this gift, they finally overcome their hang-ups surrounding it, if they are given proper teaching or God intervenes for them— and then you hit them with, “ ‘Oh, and by the way’ this can happen, but the Scripture that I lay out for it does have the possibility for its detractors, and with good cause.” In other words, it’s one of those places in the Word where honest and passionate followers of our Lord can disagree. I usually don’t teach it unless the Lord tells me to or I have a situation where the believers are mature.

Here is the Scripture: The gifts seen in 1 Corinthians are meant for believers, the called-out ones, the ecclesia. The gift of tongues and interpretation is seen as different from the tongue or baptism we receive for prayer. Yet many of the gifts seen in chapter 12 have private use. In other words, you can pray to be healed and receive a miracle privately. You can be spoken to by the Lord, or ‘prophesied’ to by the Word in your private reading time. So it does no specific violence or injustice to the Scripture. Many teach this in the context of teaching it as flowing in the “Spirit of Might.” After reading the Scriptures

that I will use, one can see why they might call it that. I do not, not because it is not seen in the word. Because for me, this is just an outflow of our gifts. I view them in the same context and with the same Scriptures as seen for all our gifts.

In 1 Corinthians 2:6-7 (see the word *mature*): Paul talks about speaking the mysteries of God. In 1 Corinthians 14:1-4, in verse 2, see the word *mysteries* again and in verse 4, you edify yourself. Well, the question can be asked, how can you be edified when you don't know what is being said; you are speaking to God, not man but HE understands you. Paul goes on to talk about interpreting and the sounding of a voice to be understood. So some kind of interpretation may be possible (vv 4-14). In verses 21-25, we see this concept of tongues for the unbeliever and secrets of the heart being revealed. Those that use this Scripture apply it to the unbelieving aspect of our own hearts. This is also an outflow of our baptism in the Holy Spirit. We get baptized in water to step into all freedoms of our conversion and we get baptized in the Holy Spirit as a sign or symbol of that conversion experience.

Most describe this not as an immediate interpretation, though that has happened to me once; but again, I was in a meeting. But more directly, as we have our quiet time with the Lord in prayer and tongues. We may not know what is coming down the road in the future or we are struggling with a situation that we do not know how to solve. Well, in time or quite suddenly, the answer is just dropped into our spirit and then we move in whatever solution we need. This may also be an aspect of what Paul said, "Building ourselves up in our most holy faith." How faith-building is it when a 'mystery' is revealed that there seemed to be no answer for?

The next grouping of Scriptures will be from the gospel of John. John 14:11-17: [see especially these:] greater works of might or power shall ye do; unity and one in the Father; Spirit of truth. John 14:26: Jesus constantly calls Him the Comforter; other translations He is called the Counselor. Isn't it comforting when we receive good counsel as we pray? For me this can also be in tongues or with my understanding, as Paul said in 1 Corinthians. Again, I see no violence done to the Scripture here. John 15:26-27: this aspect will also 'testify' of Jesus. In other words, anything that comes from an aspect of the Spirit must do no violence or disagreement to the Word. If it does, I don't care what 'answer or revelation' you got, it is not from God.

John 16:2: I put this Scripture in here as a side note that I have always thought was interesting. Jesus makes it clear that they will be put out of their synagogues and He does that within the context of talking about them being one with the Father as well as His teaching concerning the Comforter, Counselor. It is in Corinth that Paul sends his epistles detailing the gifts as well as speaking in tongues. In Acts 18, Paul goes to Corinth. It is there that he gets fed up with the Jews in the synagogue and goes to the Gentiles. An uproar ensues and the ruler of the synagogue is beaten before the judgment seat of the local ruler because the Jews of the synagogue reject Paul's teaching. John 16:7-15: see the phrase *shew* or *show* used here. This word is important because it is used consistently to talk about what the Spirit will do. In John 16:20-23; 26, we see you must be one with the Lord in this. If this teaching does some aspect of injustice to your unity in the Spirit or unity in the church, leave it by the wayside and continue to function with the Lord in love and faith and obedience (Galatians 5:22).

Over thirty-five years ago I heard a pastor talk about the Spirit of Might. Now, I have already said I just view this as an aspect of our gifts in the Spirit. But he shared how a particular ministry team had been in a land where they spoke no English. After they taught this teaching, they gathered with the pastors they had been ministering to for prayer in the Holy Spirit. As they started to pray in tongues one of the pastor's tongues was English, though he knew none. They had been preaching with an interpreter the whole time. But they needed none now as this man started to say, "You can move in miracles, you can move in healings and signs and you can bring your congregation into a miraculous and powerful movement in Christ." The English-speaking ministers could not believe their ears. So frankly all this is, is moving in what the Holy Spirit is already dropping into your Spirit and interpreting what He is telling you. That does not have to be done right then. The interpretation can come to you in a dream or by immediate revelation at some later time. To repeat, this is different from the gift of tongues and interpretation that is seen in 1 Corinthians 12, especially as shared in the local congregation.

The More Excellent Way

Let's finish up the chapter of 1 Corinthians 12:14-31: "For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am

not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked. That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.”

Here in the latter part of Chapter 12, Paul mixes other gifts that he lists elsewhere in Romans 12 and Ephesians 4. The point is not to mix the gifts, but to show true love. Remember that there are no chapter or verse delineations in the original epistles. When he says he will show us a more excellent way, he leads right into the “love” Chapter:

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 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, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profits me nothing.”

We read these words and think, “well, that’s a little over the top ‘give my body to be burned?’ ” From our perspective, it is; but from where Paul lived, they actually had to give their bodies to be burned. When we understand the depth and the heights they had to go to give us a world where Christianity makes up a good portion of the population, it is amazing. You can say what you want about western culture— sure, get as negative as you want— but when we look at other cultures, they buried the living with the dead. They enslaved their whole populations to serve a small handful of the monarchial “divine.” They killed woman who would not do the family’s bidding. When you study their cultures, they were brutal. The West may not have been perfect, but we were by far better. And not because of ourselves, but because of the God we served. We served the God of the Bible.

Have you ever wondered why we Americans created a form of government where the greatest number of people the world over received the most liberty and freedom ever known to mankind? We are getting ready to lose that liberty to socialism and communism. They lie in wait to capture and control half a continent. Secretly and quietly, through lies and outright tyranny, through the controls of judges, local and state governments and within the federal bureaucracy they wait to capture and draw the net. This is the devil’s gift to humanity.

But the God of the Bible gave covenant forms of government to His people Israel and to His people, the *Church*. In fact, this is where we got our unusual form of American government.¹ By doing so, He gave gifts to help the government work and flow better. While liberty and freedom gives us our unhampered ability to worship, 98 or more percent of our government for more than 150 years were made up of Christians. Many knew nothing of God’s gifts to His body. That is a shame. The effects are now seen in how many are attempting to throw us into captivity through socialistic and communistic forms of legislature.

So no matter what time of the year it is, God’s gifts are open to you to flow in and give to others. You can click on the Prayer Lesson Tab to read about God’s personal gift to you. But before any of that is possible, Jesus wants you

¹ “70 Years of American Captivity: The Polity of God, The Birth of a Nation, and The Betrayal of Government.” Meier, Chris. You can get this book on this site or from Amazon: < <https://www.amazon.com/70-Years-American-Captivity-Government-ebook/dp/B01GW8A16Q> >

to come to know HIM as your personal Lord and savior. It's simple. Here is the prayer you can pray, copied directly from the Bible. Romans 10:9-10: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Asking Jesus into your heart is the best gift you can give yourself. It's been waiting for you as soon as he died, was buried, and rose again over 2,000 years ago.

If you need prayer, click on any of the Contact Tabs on the website. We don't share your prayer requests with anyone outside our prayer team. Many blessings in Jesus' name.