

Missionary Families of Christ

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

“Spiritual Gifts” is a one-day course normally given to all members on their second year of membership in MFC. However, Chapter Servants may decide to give this course even earlier, depending on the needs perceived and the adaptability to the first-year formation schedule. Also, the Chapter Servants can exercise flexibility in deciding to give the training not just in one day but over a period of time (e.g., over two weekends).

Schedule

8:00 - 8:30 am	Arrival and fellowship
8:30 - 8:45	Welcome/introduction/announcements
8:45 - 9:15	Worship
9:15 - 10:00	Talk #1 : WHAT ARE SPIRITUAL GIFTS?
10:00 - 10:30	Break
10:30 - 11:15	Talk #2 : GIFT OF HEALING
11:15 - 12:15 pm	Prayers for healing
12:15 - 1:15	Lunch break
1:15 - 1:30	Praise time with songs
1:30 - 2:15	Talk #3 : GIFT OF PROPHECY
2:15 - 2:30	Break
2:30 - 3:15	Talk #4 : GIFT OF PRAISE AND TONGUES
3:15 - 3:45	Break
3:45 - 4:30	Open forum
4:30 - 6:00	Prayer meeting

Resource persons

Course Master (in charge of whole day)
Worship leader
Speakers
Senior (or at least a senior Unit Servant) for open forum
Prayer meeting leader
Guitarist
Service team
Household leaders of participants

Note: Some of the above may be the same person.

Resource materials

Attendance sheets (one for morning and one for afternoon)
Sound system
Tape recorder and blank tapes
Participant's handouts on the talks

Snacks for break (optional)

Role of the Chapter Servant (CS)

1. The CS decides when this course is to be given and in what form it is given (i.e., one day or otherwise).
2. The CS appoints a Course Master (unless it is the CS himself) and guides him in all aspects of the course.
3. The CS assigns the various resource persons needed. Or the CS may delegate this to the Course Master but would have to still approve the latter's choices.
4. The CS would normally make himself available for the Open Forum and Prayer Meeting afterwards. If not, the CS should designate a senior Unit Servant to handle these.

Arrival and Fellowship

1. A registration table is set up. Attendance is taken both in the morning and in the afternoon.
2. All participants should wear their I.D.s.
3. The music ministry should start singing about 10 minutes before the formal start, to gather participants. The Course Master should ask the participants to already settle down in their seats.

Welcome/Introduction/Announcements

1. The Course Master welcomes the participants.
2. The Course Master gives a quick rundown of the day's activities. He describes the course and runs through the schedule. He suggests preparing their questions for the Open Forum.
3. The Course Master makes any necessary announcements.
 - * about venue (location of comfort rooms, etc.)
 - * arrangements for snacks and lunch (if any)
 - * book table
4. The Course Master exhorts the participants to open up their hearts and minds to the Lord.

Morning Worship

1. This is a time for singing songs and for praising God aloud. The worship leader should give an exhortation to praise and worship at the start.
2. Readings from Scripture and prophecies may be brought forward during this time.
3. The leader ends with prayers of thanksgiving and petition (prayed by him and not by the participants individually).

Prayers for healing (after Talk #2)

1. The Course Master gives instructions for this time of prayers for healing.
2. Normally, the participants are members of household groups. The groupings for the healing prayers will be according to these household groupings. Men and women form separate groups.
3. Each participant is prayed for individually, one after the other. Before being prayed over, he/she can indicate any particular area(s) that he/she wants to be prayed over for healing.
4. The Household Servant (his wife for the women) leads in the prayers, though the other household members/participants should also articulate prayers as they are led.
5. In case there are other participants whose households are not present, they should be assigned to groups by the Course Master, who prior to the course should already know who the participants will be and how they form into different groups.
6. The group members can move on to lunch as soon as their group finishes.

Praise time with songs

1. The Course Master or his designate handles this portion.
2. This is just a time for singing joyful songs of praise, ending within 15 minutes with a short prayer by the leader.

Open forum

1. This portion should be handled by a senior, most often the Chapter Servant.
2. Questions may be asked directly or written anonymously on sheets of paper.

Prayer meeting

1. This is a regular prayer meeting, with emphasis on the use of the gift of praise and tongues and the gift of prophecy. It is, so to speak, putting into practice what has been talked about during the day.
2. The components of the prayer meeting are:
 - * Songs and loud praise
 - * Singing in tongues
 - * Prophecies and Scripture readings
 - * Sharings
 - * Intercession
 - * Closing remarks and prayers
3. The Chapter Servant or his designate handles this portion.
4. The household leaders should participate actively during worship and prayers. They should stir up the gifts of prophecy and inspired Scripture reading in order to be able to demonstrate to the participants the application of the teachings. Of course it is hoped that the participants themselves would allow these gifts to be stirred up and that they would speak before the body.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Talk No. 1 : WHAT ARE SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

Speaker's Expanded Outline

A. Introduction

1. Rationale for this training = 1 Cor 12:1.
2. Christians in general are ignorant of spiritual gifts.
 - a) We in MFC are more aware, due to our teachings, prayer assemblies, books, etc. However, we need more understanding.
 - b) Spiritual gifts are very important to our life as Christians, as MFC, and as Church.
3. The Bible says that we should expect these gifts.
 - a) Mark 16:15-18.
 - b) Further, MFC is an evangelistic movement. Spiritual gifts are part of an evangelist's life.
 - c) Expect the gifts until Christ's second coming. 1 Cor 13:8b-10.

B. Spiritual gifts

1. Key text: 1 Cor 12 to 14. These are Paul's special instructions about spiritual gifts to the Church.
 - a) In particular, we look at nine different gifts. 1 Cor 12:4-10.
 - * These are different from the 7 gifts taught to us in catechism. These 7 are the gifts found in Isaiah 11:2-3a, which are: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, fear of the Lord.
 - * So there are different types of spiritual gifts. They differ as to purpose. The 7 are for strengthening of each individual Christian. The 9 are charismatic gifts for building up the body.
 - b) The 9 gifts are described as "manifestations" of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:7). Thus, where spiritual gifts operate, the Spirit is at work.
 - * The gifts make us aware of God's presence.
 - * The gifts make us aware of God's power.
 - c) What spiritual gifts are not:
 - * Healing is not what doctors do.
 - * Tongues is not the ability to speak a foreign language.
 - * Interpretation of tongues is not what Berlitz translators do.
 - d) Other lists of spiritual gifts in the Bible.
 - * Romans 12:4-8.

* 1 Peter 4:10-11.

2. Connected to the mind of God.

- a) The first 2 are teaching gifts. These are special inspirations by which God works through one person to give understanding to another person or group of people.
- * E.g. Advice to an individual; teaching to an assembly.
- b) Expression of wisdom (1 Cor 12:8a).
- * Not just good practical judgment or common sense or a high degree of knowledge.
 - * The gift by which God reveals to us His truths, which we are then able to express to others in a way that enlightens or encourages them.
 - * Concerned with the best way to live, according to God's ways.
 - * God's guidance on how to live as a Christian.
- E.g. Mark 10:21. Jesus to rich young man.
1 Cor 12-14. Paul's practical teaching on spiritual gifts.
- c) Expression of knowledge (1 Cor 12:8b).
- * Not just knowing a lot of things.
 - * The gift which enables us to know particular revealed truths that have to do with who God is and how He works in our lives.
 - * The ability to speak an understanding of a truth of the mystery of Christ.
- E.g. Paul re God's plan in Eph 1.

3. Connected to the power of God.

- a) The next 3 are sign gifts. These are gifts which manifest the power of God in the world in a particularly striking way.
- * They call attention to God's reality.
 - * They confirm the truth of God's message.
- E.g. Healings experienced in Lourdes. People turn to Christ because of them.
- b) Faith (1 Cor 12:9a).
- * Does not refer to the faith by which Christians believe and turn to Christ. This faith is given to all. This is what makes one a Christian.
 - * The charismatic gift of faith seems to be a special gift of prayer. Praying with a God-given confidence which produce extraordinary results. It is knowing that what one asks for will be given. Mark 11:23-24.
- E.g. 1 Kings 18. Elijah vs 450 prophets of Baal.
- * A God-given faith. One cannot work oneself into such faith.
- c) Healing (1 Cor 12:9b).
- * Supernatural ability to effect a cure of physical or other human illness through prayer.

- * Does not refer to the power of prayer for healing which is part of the ordinary life of a Christian Community. James 5:14-15a.

d) Mighty deeds or miracles (1 Cor 12:10a).

- * The supernatural ability to perform miraculous acts.
E.g. Raising the dead.
- * Less common, but still happens today.

4. Connected to the Spirit of God.

a) The next 4 are revelational gifts. These are gifts by which God makes known something about the present situation to His people.

b) Prophecy (1 Cor 12:10b).

- * The gift by which God speaks through a person a message to an individual or to a whole community.
- * A word of encouragement, consolation, chastisement.

c) Discernment of spirits (1 Cor 12:10c).

- * The gift by which a person is able to tell whether in a situation what is at work is the Holy Spirit, an evil spirit or just man's own spirit.
- * You get a kind of a vision or a sense.

d) Tongues (1 Cor 12:10d).

- * The gift by which one utters words or sounds which are not known or understandable to his human intellect.
- * Basically of two kinds: first is a gift of prayer, and second is as a message to a community (prophecy).

e) Interpretation of tongues (1 Cor 12:10e).

- * A companion to the gift of tongues, when used in prophecy.
- * Does not refer to the abilities of an interpreter of languages. The one who exercises this gift does not even understand the tongues. What is spoken in tongues may not even be an actual language.
- * Like in prophecy, there is an urging to speak words. What is spoken is an accurate interpretation.

C. Spiritual Gifts, the Individual and the Community

1. Purpose of Spiritual Gifts

a) Where spiritual gifts operate, Christians are much more vividly aware of the presence and power of God.

b) Gifts are given to build up the community.

- * 1 Cor 12:7. The enumeration of the gifts is followed by the section on the

body and members.

- * Here we see the difference between the 7 gifts and the 9 charismatic gifts. The 7 are for the individual, the 9 for the community. The 7 are for personal sanctification, the 9 are for service.

c) 1 Cor 12:5. “Ministries” or “service.”

- * Gifts are a service for the community. Gifts are not primarily for personal benefit. Rather, the gifts equip one for service in the community.
- * Paul ends Ch. 12 with a list of various services.

d) Gifts are tools or resources. They are equipment given by God for the work Christians are to do in the world.

- * Thus spiritual gifts are very important for the life and mission of MFC.

2. Spiritual Gifts and Holiness

a) Gifts are to be used in a loving way to build up the community.

- * 1 Cor 13:1 - 3.
- * Paul is not playing down spiritual gifts. Not saying valueless if no love (after all, healing is healing!). Rather: I am nothing if I do not love.
- * Point: There is a difference between charismatic power and holiness.
- * The measure of a person is holiness, not charismatic power.
- * Same point in Mt 7:21-23. Jesus is not saying that they did not prophesy, etc. But this is not what makes a man his disciple; it is doing God’s will, being holy.

b) Love is at the very life of a Christian community.

c) So spiritual gifts are not a sign of holiness.

- * We actually can see that God gives us spiritual gifts even when we are still sinners.
- * Rather, they are equipment for working to build up the Christian community in holiness and for service.

3. Seeking Spiritual Gifts

a) 1 Cor 14:1.

- * Paul’s attitude is so different from many Christians who are reluctant to receive gifts.
- * Paul actually even commands us to strive eagerly for the gifts.

b) Paul’s attitude makes sense because the gifts are desperately needed in the Church today.

- * If the gifts are for building up, then they are really valuable and needed.

c) How to obtain the gifts:

- * Biggest obstacle: not being open to them; not wanting them.
- * Reasons: Fear of God, i.e., bringing God too close for comfort.
Desire to do things ourselves.
Not wanting to yield or surrender to God.
- * We need to be open. Gifts are from God, so they must be good for us.
- * Gifts are given freely, but not forced on us.
- * Have faith! Gal 3:5. Faith is the means to obtaining the gifts.

D. Conclusion.

1. Many parts of the Church today are lacking in vibrancy and effectiveness. In the liturgy, sermons, parish programs. “Dead!”
 - a) Some disturbing questions:
 - * How is our parish council meeting different from say, a Lions Club meeting?
 - * If the Holy Spirit leaves, would 97% of church activities still go on without disruption?
 - * Have we allowed the Church, which is the channel of God’s grace and manifestation of His life, to become a mere human institution?
 - b) There is a similar danger for us in MFC, even when we seem charismatic. Are we just going on our own steam?
2. It is the Holy Spirit who gives life. And spiritual gifts are a part of it.
 - a) God calls us to a charismatic life. Our spirituality.
 - * Make full use of charismatic gifts.
 - * Use the gifts not just at prayer assemblies, but in day-to-day life.
 - b) 1 Cor 10:31.

Book reference: “Renewing the Face of the Earth” by Frank Padilla (particularly chapter 11 on Spiritual Gifts)

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Talk No. 1 : WHAT ARE SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

Participant's Handout

- A. We should expect spiritual gifts to be a part of our lives.
- * Mark 16:15-18.
 - * 1 Cor 13:8-10.
- B. Spiritual gifts.
1. Key text: 1 Cor 12 to 14.
 2. Nine different gifts: 1 Cor 12:4-10. Charismatic gifts.
 3. Listings of other gifts: Isaiah 11:2, Romans 12:4-8, 1 Peter 4:10-11
 4. Grouping of gifts.
 - * Teaching gifts: expression of wisdom, expression of knowledge.
 - * Sign gifts: faith, healing, miracles.
 - * Revelational gifts: prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues.
- C. Spiritual Gifts, the Individual and the Community.
1. Gifts are given to build up the community. 1 Cor 12:7.
 2. Gifts are a service for the community. 1 Cor 12:5.
 3. Gifts are tools or resources used by Christians to carry on God's work in the world.
- D. Spiritual Gifts and Holiness.
1. Gifts are to be used in a loving way to build up the community. 1 Cor 13:1-3.
 2. Love is at the very life of a Christian community.
- E. Seeking Spiritual Gifts.
1. Our attitude: 1 Cor 14:1.
 2. Gifts are desperately needed in the Church today.
 3. How to obtain the gifts:
 - * Be open. Eagerly desire them.
 - * Have faith. Gal 3:5.

Suggested reading: "Renewing the Face of the Earth" by Frank Padilla (particularly chapter 11 on Spiritual Gifts)

SPIRITUAL GIFTS
Talk No. 2 : GIFT OF HEALING

Speaker's Expanded Outline

A. Introduction.

1. We need to understand healing from the perspective of our relationship with God as our Father.
 - * Share a personal experience of God as a Father.
2. Luke 11:1-4,11-13.
 - a) Jesus sets the tone in our relationship with God. He is our Father; we are His sons and daughters.
 - * Because God is our Father, He will give us what is good for us, not because He wants to prove that He loves us, but simply because He loves us.
 - * One of the basic things our Father wants for us is good health, i.e., the wholeness of man—mind, body and emotions.
 - b) If we believe that God is love, then it is easy for us to believe that healing is an ordinary, not extraordinary, sign of His compassion and love.
 - c) Attitude of Jesus towards healing.
 - * Mark 1:40-41. Jesus is saying the same thing to us. "Of course, I want to heal you."
 - * Jesus preached not only with words but also with deeds. He preached salvation and victory over the devil. He preached repentance and forgave those who have sinned and repented. He healed those who were sick.

B. Four basic kinds of prayers for healing.

1. The four kinds are:
 - a) Prayer for repentance -- for personal sin.
 - b) Prayer for inner healing -- for emotional problem.
 - c) Prayer for physical healing -- for physical sickness.
 - d) Prayer for deliverance -- for demonic oppression.

It is important for us to know that different kinds of sickness require different prayers so that we will be able to help people the way they should be helped.

2. Forgiveness of sin.

- a) Mark 2:1-12.
 - * Forgiveness of sin is the first and deepest kind of healing that Christ brings.

- b) There seems to be a connection between much of our physical sickness and our spiritual or emotional health.
 - * It may be helpful to consider praying for repentance or inner healing before praying for physical healing.
 - * Involved is not only our asking forgiveness from God but also our own forgiveness for others.
 - c) The sacrament of reconciliation is essential.
 - * We should go to confession regularly.
3. Inner healing (of hurts caused by wrong upbringing or painful experiences).
- a) Jesus who is the same yesterday, today and forever can take the memories of our past, heal them from the wounds that still remain and affect our present lives, and fill with His love all these places in us that have been empty for so long.
 - * We pray for inner healing when we are held down in any way by the hurts of the past.
 - b) How do we pray for inner healing?
 - * Prepare for it. Do not pray on impulse.
 - * Choose a place that is quiet and private.
 - * As much as possible, except when spouses pray for each other, women should pray with women and men with men.
 - * This prayer is usually done for another person, seldom for oneself. Because even the talking out of the problem can in itself be a healing process.
 - * The person being prayed for brings to light the things that have hurt him/her. Sometimes, if the hurt is deep and very private, the person has the option to skip details.
 - * Pray so that the Lord may heal the binding effects of the hurtful incidents of the past.
4. Physical healing.
- How to pray for this:
- a) Listen -- to find out what to pray for.
 - * Turn over your heart and mind to Jesus.
 - b) Lay hands -- to communicate love and concern.
 - c) Verbalize your prayer.
 - * Use ordinary speaking voice. No need to shout or be dramatic.
 - * Ask for the healing. Be specific.
 - * When praying in a team, listen to one another. Do not pray independently. Be one in your prayers.

- d) Pray with confidence.
 - * Trust that it is God's ordinary will to heal the person who asks.
 - * However, do not put pressure on the person being prayed for by demanding that he express faith in the healing.
 - * Pray with thanksgiving.
 - e) If you do not know what to pray for or are not sure what is God's will in a situation, it is better to pray in tongues.
5. Deliverance.
- a) This is a prayer said in the name and authority of Jesus in order to free a person oppressed by evil spirits.
 - b) When is deliverance prayer called for?
 - * In cases of compulsion, that is, being unable to change even after doing everything possible to achieve self-discipline.
 - * If inner healing does not seem to accomplish healing over some time.
 - c) How to pray for deliverance.
 - * Prepare for it. Fasting is excellent preparation.
 - * Pray with a team but assign a leader.
 - * Preliminary interview or familiarity with the case is important.
 - * Choose a private room. Do not allow an audience to watch.
 - * The person being prayed with should be fully aware of what is happening.
 - * Prayer is a command to the demonic forces, ordering them to depart in the name of Jesus.
 - * Pray with authority. Do not hesitate or hedge. Be decisive.
 - d) If follow-up cannot be provided or if no Christian support can be ensured, hesitate to pray for deliverance because healing cannot be completed.

C. Points to remember.

1. Healing is not a special magic gift reserved for a few.
 - * Families members are encouraged to pray for one another.
 - * Anybody can pray, even children (especially for physical healing).
2. Do not despise doctors and medicine.
 - * Medicine is not opposed to faith in the healing power of God.
 - * Sirach 38:1-15.
3. There is no definite technique or pattern to prayer for healing. Even Jesus healed in various ways.
4. In praying for others, be free of the need to prove anything. Healing is not a test of

faith but a natural response to God's generous love.

5. Trust in God

- * Ask God to meet your needs but do not tell Him when or how to do it.
- * When we pray, our faith is in God and not in our own capability.
- * Jesus should always be the center of our prayers.

6. Abstain from any form of healing prayers that are not Christian.

- * E.g., faith healing and any healing connected with spiritualism or witchcraft.

D. Conclusion.

End with an exhortation to make prayers for healing an ordinary occurrence in our families and in our life together in MFC.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS**Talk No. 2 : GIFT OF HEALING**Participant's Handout

- A. Understanding healing from the perspective of our relationship with God as our Father.
Luke 11:1-4,11-13.

- B. Attitude of Jesus towards healing. Mark 1:40-41.

- C. Four basic kinds of prayers for healing.
 - 1. Prayer for repentance -- for personal sin. Mark 2:1-12.
 - 2. Prayer for inner healing -- for emotional problem.
 - 3. Prayer for physical healing -- for physical sickness.
 - 4. Prayer for deliverance -- for demonic oppression.

- D. Points to remember.
 - 1. Healing is no special magic gift reserved for a few. Families are encouraged to pray for healing.
 - 2. Do not despise doctors or medicine. Sirach 38:1-15.
 - 3. There is no definite technique or pattern to follow.
 - 4. Be free of the need to prove anything.
 - 5. Trust in God.
 - * Ask God to meet your needs but do not tell Him when or how to do it.
 - * Our faith is in God and not in our own capability.
 - * Jesus is always the center of our prayers.
 - 6. Abstain from any form of healing prayers that are not Christian.

- E. Prayers for healing should become ordinary occurrences in our families and in our life together in MFC.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Talk No. 3 : GIFT OF PROPHECY

Speaker's Expanded Outline

A. Introduction

1. Prophecy as a useful tool for building up the Christian assembly gathered in prayer.
 - a) As a body of committed Christians, it is very important for us to hear the Lord and do what He commands. One of the ways that God speaks to us is through the gift of prophecy.
 - b) 1 Cor 14:1 “Set your hearts on spiritual gifts, above all, the gift of prophecy.” Among the manifestations of the Holy Spirit or the spiritual gifts, prophecy can most contribute to the good of the whole.
2. It is important for us to understand it, yield to it, and respond to it. Questions most often asked: What is it? How do I know when, what, and how to prophesy? How do I judge and respond to it? How do we grow in the gift?
3. Note: The speaker may share his own initial positive experience of hearing and responding to a prophecy during a prayer assembly.

B. What is prophecy?

1. Common misconceptions.
 - a) Delivered in an “ecstatic” or trance-like state.
 - * That is not Christian prophecy. Paul says specifically that, “The spirits of the prophets are under the prophets’ control” (1 Cor 14: 32-33).
 - b) Prediction of future events.
 - * Prediction clearly occurs in true prophecy, but it is only part of the gift. Some people who are not Christians at all can predict future events successfully, yet we cannot accept their “prophecies” (as we shall define in a while) as God’s word to us.
2. Proper notions.
 - a) Prophecy is a gift by which God speaks a message through a person to a specific person or group of people.
 - * Hg 1:13. This is a good way of understanding prophesying: giving a message from the Lord to His people. It is delivered by a person who, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, uses his own voice and words to make known the message of God. The Lord commissions a person from among

the people and gives him a message to bring to His people.

- b) Purpose: 1 Cor 14:3
- * Through prophecy God wants to encourage us when we are disheartened; urge us on when we are serving Him faithfully; direct us when uncertain; warn us when moving towards danger; console us when suffering; inspire us when our zeal is lacking or diminished.
3. There are four distinct purposes for which God gives the prophetic gift to His body:
- a) Encouragement and exhortation.
- * Acts 15:32.
 - * It is intended to revive a person's spirits, to strengthen him and give him hope. Words like "I love you" or "'I am with you" received with faith can be profoundly encouraging.
- b) Conviction, admonition, correction.
- * The Holy Spirit will reveal to us our sins, so that we can turn away from them and be freed from its tyranny and escape condemnation.
 - * E.g. "Put away from yourselves your anger, your jealousy." "Turn your hearts back to me."
- c) Inspiration.
- * Inspirational prophecy is not so much concerned with communicating information as with evoking a response.
 - * E.g. To lead the community in a worshipful response to God. At those times, the important thing is to respond to God, not to remember the exact words of the prophecy.
- d) Guidance.
- * The guidance which we receive from God can apply to important directional matters as well as to specific individual needs.
 - * E.g. Acts 11:27-30. God spoke through prophecy and warned of a famine. That actually occurred and the prophecy prepared the Christians for it.
 - * Acts 13:2ff. A prophetic instruction was received: God wanted Paul and Barnabas to depart on a missionary journey.
4. Receiving a word from God.
- a) Receiving the words of the message.
- * Some people find this almost like listening to a tape recorded message. They seem to hear a voice speaking. Others find thoughts forming in their minds without any effort or direction of their own, as the thoughts just come.
 - * However it happens, a complete message soon forms itself, and the person speaks out the words he has been given.
- b) Receiving the sense of a message.

- * One is given a very clear sense or understanding of the message; however, he may not immediately know how to say it or with what words to express it. And so he needs to supply the right words himself.

c) Receiving the first words of the message.

- * One who prophesies will sometimes receive neither the words nor the sense of the message. Instead, he will receive only a word or two. If he is convinced that those few words begin a full prophetic message, he can simply begin to speak out. As he does so, the rest of the message will be given.

5. Delivery of the message or prophetic utterance.

a) Style and expression.

- * Prophetic oracles. These are brief, direct communications to God's people, usually delivered in the first person as if God Himself were speaking. Oracles are very common. They normally begin with "My people, ..." or "The Lord says,"
- * Prophecy in song. Such a prophecy is usually chanted or sung to an inspired melody. It is sung not for dramatic effect but because it is inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- * Visions. Normally need interpretations.
- * Prophecy in tongues with interpretation.

b) Manner and timing.

- * Since the Lord uses an individual as His vehicle of communication, the words of the prophecy will be consistent with the way the person speaks and the language and style a person uses in a prophecy are under the person's control.
- * This means the person prophesying has a responsibility to speak the prophecy in words that people can understand. This also means delivering the prophecy in a simple, straightforward way, speaking loudly enough so everyone present can hear, and avoiding unnecessary drama.
- * Prophecies must also be delivered in the right place and at the right time. Prophesying is very appropriate during a prayer assembly but follows the order of the meeting on the proper timing (after the singing in tongues and a moment of silence). 1 Cor 14:39-40.
- * Some people argue that placing restrictions on the exercise of the gift stifles the Holy Spirit. Actually these simple guidelines are in keeping with Paul's instruction to exercise the gifts "properly and in order" (1 Cor 14:40).

6. Commissioning (or anointing) of a prophet.

a) God gives you the message and the authority to proclaim it in His name; and when proclaimed, the Holy Spirit does things among the people: He unleashes His power. (Isa. 55:10-11).

- * E.g. A simple "I am with you" is no great revelation but the power that goes

with that word of God would certainly bear fruit.

- b) How can I tell if the Lord is commissioning me? He stirs up a feeling or conviction in us to speak in His name: the action of the Holy Spirit as He prepares a person to exercise some spiritual gift.
 - * Sometimes, the urge to prophesy is accompanied by physical sensations (wind blowing, shivering, quivering, quickening of the heart, etc.). But not always, and more often than not, there are no such sensations. Sometimes, these can get in the way or confuse us if we always would depend on such physical sensations. They are not by themselves anointings.
 - * One scenario: At a prayer assembly you felt what seems to be an anointing but did not speak. Then somebody spoke out the message you were hearing the Lord wanting you to prophesy about. That feeling or conviction might well be a genuine anointing which you did not respond to.
- c) When we get anointing, we should simply speak out.
 - * Many people never speak out in prophecy because they want to be absolutely sure. It is OK to make mistakes. None of us can ever be totally sure unless we say it and give others the chance to judge or test the prophecy.
 - * 1 Cor 14:29.

C. Growing in the gift.

1. As hearers.
 - a) Pray that the Lord will speak to us directly, especially through the gift of prophecy.
 - b) Expectantly wait for the word of the Lord to come.
 - c) Respond in faith, obedience, and prudence.
 - d) Listen and be familiar with the voice of the Lord through regular prayer. Meditate and reflect on the prophecies spoken.
2. As prophets.
 - a) All of #1 above
 - b) “Stir up the gift”: put yourself in readiness to receive a prophecy from God; not “prophesy by your own power,” that is, work up a prophecy by yourself.
 - * Put aside selfish ambition and take on an ambition to serve.
 - c) Speak when you receive an anointing to prophesy.

- d) Be open to receive feedback and correction. It often helps to talk with others who are tested prophets. Share your experiences and difficulties with them.
- e) Be submissive to God in the way you prophesy. You should prophesy to whatever extent God gives you the ability to prophesy; neither holding back a gift you have received, nor reaching out to grasp something God has not given you.
- f) Be submissive to the body of Christ. Be obedient to your elders.
- g) Be patient. Faithfully and peacefully keep at something over a long period of time. Persevere in your determination to grow.
- h) Be grateful to God.

D. Concluding remarks.

1. The gift of prophecy is not essential to salvation. Yet, to decide that we will do without prophecy just because it is possible to do without prophecy is to settle for less, just because we can settle for less.
2. Today, God desires to speak directly and clearly to His people, warning them, building them up, and giving them direction. Let us desire the gift of prophecy and respond to it that our effectiveness in serving God and our neighbor will increase.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS
Talk No. 3 : GIFT OF PROPHECY

Participant's Handout

- A. Prophecy is a gift by which God speaks a message through a person to a specific person or group of people.
- B. Purposes of Prophecy:
 - 1. Encouragement, exhortation
 - 2. Conviction, admonition, correction
 - 3. Inspiration
 - 4. Guidance
- C. Different types of prophetic utterances:
 - 1. Oracles
 - 2. Prophecy in song
 - 3. Visions
 - 4. Prophecy in tongues (with interpretation)
- D. The giving of the gift of prophecy is a commissioning by God to proclaim His message, backed by His authority to proclaim it in His name.
- E. We need to grow in the gift of prophecy:
 - 1. As hearers
 - 2. As prophets

SPIRITUAL GIFTS
TALK No. 4 : GIFTS OF PRAISE AND TONGUES

Speaker's Expanded Outline

A. Introduction

1. Spiritual gifts, including those of praise and tongues, are the work of the Holy Spirit. They are freely given and are to be freely received.
2. These gifts are given for our personal individual growth as well as for the growth of the body (communal).
3. Our use of the gifts and our experience of them are manifestations of God's presence and power.

B. GIFT OF PRAISE

1. Reasons why everyone should praise God:
 - a) God commands it in His Word.
 - * Mt 4:10. Ps 150:6.
 - * There are many more places in the Bible where God commands us to praise Him. Many psalms commence with the command "Praise the Lord."
 - * Not to praise God is to disobey Him.
 - b) Praise is proper for the upright.
 - * Ps 33:1. Some Christians feel that praising God and rejoicing in Him is unseemly and improper. But the Bible projects the opposite view.
 - * Ps 92:1. Praise has a beneficial influence. It is good, helpful, healthy, therapeutic. There is a healthy release to be had from praising God that benefits the whole person.
 - c) Praise honors God.
 - * Ps 50:23a. Every time we offer praise, we uplift, magnify and glorify our God. As Christians our whole objective and desire in life should be to glorify God.
 - d) The praising soul learns to "delight himself in the Lord" and God gives him the desires of his heart.
 - * Ps 37:4. Too many people say "If only God would grant me the desires of my heart, how I would praise Him for it." The Divine Order is the reverse. We praise Him and *then* He gives us the desires of our heart.
 - e) Praise precedes victory.
 - * 2 Chr 20:21-22. Story of King Jehoshaphat leading God's people into battle.

He appointed musicians and singers to march ahead of the army (v.21). The result was disaster for their enemies.

- * Imagine an army being led by singers and people praising God. How strange! But though the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (natural), nevertheless they are mighty and can pull down Satan's strongholds.
- * As we go into battle for the Lord today, we should do so with a realization of the power of praise. Going forth praising God is going with faith and victory. We can then experience God fighting and working on our behalf.

f) Praise is a protection against backsliding.

- * No person ever backslides who maintains a life of praise to God.
- * Example: Job. He did not backslide because he steadfastly maintained his praise to God even in the most trying circumstances.

2. Characteristics of using the gift of praise.

a) Praise begins from the heart and manifests itself.

- * Ps 86:12.
- * Real praise begins in the heart. It is the expression of our feeling, sentiment and desire towards the Lord. It is the very depth of our being, the seat of our emotions. It begins in the heart (musing, meditation, etc.) and issues forth in a physical manifestation.

b) Praise is audible.

- * Ps 66:8.
- * Praise can be done:
 - with shouting. Ps 47:6; Ps 35:27a; Ps 66:1-2.
 - with singing. Ps 100:1-2; Ps 95:1-2.
 - with laughter. Ps 126:2.
 - with musical instruments. Ps 150:1-5.

c) Praise involves physical participation.

- * Clapping.
- * Lifting up one's hands. Ps 134:2.
- * Dancing. Ps 150:4a.
 - The Hebrew and Greek words translated "dance" have a variety of interpretations including "leaping," "skipping," "lifting up the feet." Acts 3:8.
 - For the Israelites, dancing was an accepted form for expressing great joy and victory. Ps 149:2-3.
 - Dancing ceases when joy ceases. Lam 5:15.
 - Dancing returns when joy returns. Jer 31:13.

d) Praise involves the totality of our being.

- * Ps 103:1.
- * 1 Thes 5:23. We are a tri-partite being composed of spirit, soul and body.

- spirit. Lk 1:47.
- soul. Ps 103:1.
- body. Ps 145:21.

- e) Praise is to be done continually, at all times, in all places.
- * Ps 34:2, Ps 35:28, Heb 13:15.
 - * In order to praise the Lord continually and at all times, we must of necessity worship Him everywhere and in all places.

C. GIFT OF TONGUES

1. Two aspects.

- a) Praying in tongues. 1 Cor 14:14.
- b) Prophecy in tongues.
- * Note: This talk focuses on the first aspect.

2. Misconceptions versus reality regarding this gift.

- a) The Holy Spirit forces you to speak in tongues.
- * Reality: The Holy Spirit never forces anyone. With total respect for us whom He has created, God gently makes the grace available to us. It is up to us to cooperate.
- b) When you first speak in tongues, you are going to have a very dramatic and tremendous emotional experience. Some manifestations: trembling, flapping the hands, hitting oneself, distorting the mouth, gnashing the teeth.
- * Reality: Our God is a gentle and loving God. The spirit we receive is a spirit of worship and praise, not one of violence and hysteria.
- c) If the Holy Spirit wants you to receive the gift, then you will. So let it just happen; you do not have to do anything. Just let it be. So you just sit there with you mouth shut and your arms crossed.
- * Reality: we need to approach the Lord with expectant faith, believing that if we ask we will receive. Then we need to open our hearts, minds, our whole being to Him.

3. Praying in tongues often leads to singing in tongues during worship.

D. Closing.

Use the gifts of praise and tongues in personal prayer, household meetings and prayer assemblies.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Talk No. 4 : GIFTS OF PRAISE AND TONGUES

Participant's Handout

- A. Spiritual gifts are the work of the Holy Spirit. They are freely given and are to be freely received. They are given for our personal individual growth as well as for the growth of the body.
- B. Reasons why everyone should praise God:
1. God commands it. Mt 4:10; Ps 150:6.
 2. Praise is proper for the upright. Ps 33:1; Ps 92:1.
 3. Praise honors God. Ps 50:23a.
 4. God gives to one who praises Him the desires of his heart. Ps 37:4.
 5. Praise precedes victory. 2 Chr 20:21-22.
 6. Praise is a protection against backsliding.
- C. Characteristics of using the gift of praise.
1. Praise begins from the heart and manifests itself. Ps 86:12.
 2. Praise is audible. Ps 66:8.
 - * shouting. Ps 47:6, Ps 35:27a; Ps 66:1-2.
 - * singing. Ps 100:1-2; Ps 95:1-2.
 - * laughter. Ps 126:2.
 - * musical instruments. Ps 150:1-5.
 3. Praise involves physical participation.
 - * clapping. Ps 47:2.
 - * lifting up one's hands. Ps 134:2.
 - * dancing. Ps 150:4a.
 4. Praise involves the totality of our being--spirit, soul, and body. Ps 103:1.
 5. Praise is to be done continually, at all times, in all places. Ps 34:2, Ps 35:28, Heb 13:15.
- D. Two aspects of the gift of tongues:
1. Praying in tongues. 1 Cor 14:14.
 2. Prophecy in tongues.
- E. Misconceptions regarding the gift of prayer tongues.
1. The Holy Spirit forces you to speak in tongues.
Reality: Holy Spirit never forces anyone.
 2. When you first speak in tongues, you are going to have a very dramatic and tremendous emotional experience.
Reality: God is gentle and loving. The Spirit we receive is a spirit of worship and praise, not one of violence and hysteria.
 3. Attitude to just let it be.
Reality: We need to approach the Lord with expectant faith.

(SG. Oct 7, 2019)