

Holy Spirit Power

April 29th, 2018 - Holy Spirit Power
Part 4

Hot For Jesus is the title of today's message. Let's start by reading **1 Corinthians 12:27-31** from the Amplified Bible where it says; "*Now you [collectively] are Christ's body, and individually [you are] members of it [each with his own special purpose and function]. So God has appointed and placed in the church [for His own use]: first apostles [chosen by Christ], second prophets [those who foretell the future, those who speak a new message from God to the people], third teachers, then those who work miracles, then those with the gifts of healings, the helpers, the administrators, and speakers in various kinds of [unknown] tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire and strive for the greater gifts [if acquiring them is going to be your goal]. And yet I will show you a still more excellent way [one of the choicest graces and the highest of them all: unselfish love].*"

The Church is meant to be a supernatural organism, not a natural human organization. The manifestation of these gifts began to cease for the most part, but not totally, after the apostolic age period which was roughly 33 AD – 100 AD. The apostolic age of the history of Christianity is traditionally regarded as the period of the twelve apostles, dating from the great commission of the apostles by the risen Jesus in Jerusalem around 33 AD, until the death of the last apostle, believed to be John the Apostle in Anatolia in 100 AD.

Persecution of Christians took place all the way to Constantine the Great, who made Christianity the national religion of Rome (in the early 300's AD), the gifts of the spirit operated less as organized religion took over, which being the birth of the Catholic Church.

The church became lukewarm and the gifts ceased to operate. So, history shows that Christians went from being hot for Jesus to lukewarm. During the Middle Ages the gifts were manifesting in the Waldenses and Albigenses sects. The Methodist Church in the 1800's has records of the gifts of the spirit in operation.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, certainly would have concurred. In his journal entry for August 15, 1750, he wrote, "*I was fully convinced of what I had long suspected, 1. That the Montanists, in the second and third centuries, were real, scriptural Christians; and, 2. that the grand reason why the miraculous gifts were so soon withdrawn, was not only that faith and holiness were well nigh lost; but that dry, formal, orthodox men began even then to ridicule whatever gifts they had not themselves, and to decry them all as either madness or imposture.*"

In a letter to Conyers Middleton (Works, 10:1-79), Wesley defined, described, and defended a whole host of spiritual gifts, including: "*1. Casting out devils; 2. Speaking with new tongues; 3. Escaping dangers, in which otherwise they must have perished; 4. Healing the sick; 5. Prophecy, foretelling things to come; 6. Visions; 7. Divine dreams; And, 8. Discerning of spirits*" (Works, 10:16). *Although the order and even the mention of some "gifts" not normally associated with the biblical accounts (such as visions and dreams) may seem a bit strange, the fact remains that Wesley believed that the gifts of the Holy Spirit were not only important but also were active during the 18th century Evangelical Revival.*"

Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf, a towering intellectual with the best Seminary education of his days writes the following, which is telling about life in the early Moravian Church: "*To believe against hope is the root of the gift of miracles: and I owe this testimony to our beloved Church, that Apostolic powers are there manifested. We have had undeniable proofs thereof in the unequivocal discovery of things, persons, and circumstances, which could not, humanly, have been discovered: --- in the healing of maladies in themselves incurable, such as*

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cancers, consumptions when the patient was in the agonies of death, etc., all by means of prayer, or of a single word.”

In **1 Corinthians 13:8-10** we read; *“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. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.”*

Those who hold to this scripture as proof that the gifts of the spirit have ceased in the church are not taking into consideration that this scripture is talking about an age to come, not now, for we can clearly see that the perfect has not yet come. A person doesn't have to be a theologian or educated to realize that the 'perfect' hasn't come yet. That won't happen until Jesus Christ returns.

The great commission was not given to be changed somewhere in the future church, it's ongoing until that which is perfect comes being that of the second coming of Christ, so until then signs and wonders are going to be used to win the lost souls to Christ and establish a living church that is operating in the supernatural as it was originally commissioned to do.

Mark 16:15-18 says; *“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. 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.”*

We read in the book of Acts chapter 28 where Paul was bitten by the viper while sitting at a fire, but he shook it off and nothing happened to him. The islanders at Malta thought then he was a god. But this sign of the scripture we just read, opened the door for him to bring healing to many sick people on the island.

The church cannot fulfill their God given destination without having the gifts of the Holy Spirit manifesting in their midst, be it in church, on the mission field, mass evangelism, without the gifts of the Spirit you become another, good works, humanitarian effort, which by the way is going on all the time in other non Christian religious and secular sects all over the world today with great success.

The Christian church has reached a satisfaction to function with out the Gifts of the Spirit, and simply have no need of a supernatural ministry when it can be built in the natural quite well with good works programs that only differentiate from the secular in that they are called faith-based, which also makes it a part of all faiths doing good works without offending any other religions. You need to be calling yourself a Christian and that Jesus is Lord of your life. Christianity is the only religion that can get you into heaven, absolutely, unequivocally no other message or faith will give you eternal life in heaven. Jesus said in **John 14:6**; *“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’”*

Could it be that the church has lost her first love, and exchanged the supernatural for a natural? Has the church gotten lukewarm and that's why we rarely see the gifts of the Holy Spirit in operation? Studying history we see that a little leaven of unbelief, leavened the whole lot of people.

In **Revelation 3:14-22**, we read what Jesus told the Apostle John to write to the churches. This last church is probably the best example of the present-day church. It says; *“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable,*

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poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.” “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.””

A portion of Matthew Henry’s Commentary on Revelation 3:14-22 says the following; *“II. The subject-matter, in which observe, The heavy charge drawn up against this church, ministers and people, by one who knew them better than they knew themselves: Thou art neither cold nor hot, but worse than either; I would thou wert cold or hot, Rev. 3:15. Luke warmness or indifference in religion is the worst temper in the world. If religion is a real thing, it is the most excellent thing, and therefore we should be in good earnest in it; if it is not a real thing, it is the vilest imposture, and we should be earnest against it. If religion is worth any thing, it is worth every thing; an indifference here is inexcusable: Why halt you between two opinions? If God be God, follow him; if Baal (be God), follow him.”*

The reference to Baal here refers to the prophet Elijah’s showdown with Baal’s prophets, a convincing factor that showed the heathen that God’s power was sovereign. Supernatural fire came down from heaven in front of their eyes and consumed the altar in one breath. It’s the supernatural that God will continue to use in the church in these last days. Are you settling for a natural lukewarm Christian life void of signs, wonders and miracles with the gifts of the spirit operating in your life?

I would encourage you to click on the link and read all of this commentary,

<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/matthew-henry/Mark.16.14-Mark.16.18>

Jesus has a supernatural life for you and you need not fear the supernatural in thinking that the gifts of the spirit could be of an evil spirit. Let’s read what Jesus said in **Luke 11:11-13**; *“If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 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!”*

Don’t allow fear to get into your mind to rob you of the gifts and speaking in unknown tongues that God has for you. He will not gift you a counterfeit.

Has the church become like the children of Israel who wandered in the wilderness for 40 years and because of their fear and unbelief, that generation never entered into the land of promise. The old generation had to die before God could move. We read about it in **Joshua 5:5-7**; *“For all the people who came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness, on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people who were men of war, who came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the Lord—to whom the Lord swore that He would not show them the land which the Lord had sworn to their fathers that He would give us, “a land flowing with milk and honey.” Then Joshua circumcised their sons whom He raised up in their place; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way.”*

The full land of promise was theirs to take. Yet they wandered because of unbelief and disobedience. The same applies to the church today regarding the baptism in the Holy Spirit and all of the gifts he wants to give you. So much is at your disposal, it’s free, the Father wants you to take it to step into your call and election. These gifts will help you in every area of your life and will help you take possession of the land God wants you to take –

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whatever that land looks like for you. Just like Joshua and Caleb stepped into the promised land, you can step into your promised land.

God had to get rid of the old generation to make way for a new generation to go in and take possession of the promised land. Maybe that's what needs to happen in churches today where the old generation – if they're hindering the Holy Spirit – need to be removed so that a new generation of on fire people can step into all that God has for them. Pastors should re-evaluate who's on their board and if they are hindering the Holy Spirit, they should be removed. I believe it's that grievous to God when he sees people in authority in churches who are stubbornly resisting the Holy Spirit.

All throughout the history of the early church until now, you can find periods where the Holy Spirit gifts are operating according to the commission, and then because of the church becoming lukewarm, the gifts of the spirit cease to operate. It's not because the Holy Spirit doesn't want to show up any longer, because he is still here. It's the church that isn't showing up, yielding to him and desiring him.

What is the God given purpose of the Gifts of the Spirit? There are a few to mention here.

1)To make himself known on earth. We read in **1 Corinthians 12:12-14**; *“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. 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. For in fact the body is not one member but many.”* As a member of the body, you have gifts available to you to use. **1 Corinthians 12:27** also says; *“Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.”*

Christ ministered on earth individually and corporately, with limitations of being in one place at one time while doing so. But after his ascension and the Holy Spirit was poured out on believers then those limitations came off and he was able to minister through many members of his Church all over the world at the same time. A Pentecost, the disciples went throughout the world preaching through the power of the Holy Spirit.

So, a church without the gifts of the Holy Spirit in operation is not going to have the effect on the world which he originally intended, thus resulting in lukewarm good works programs, humanitarian efforts, community service, etc. that are void of the power of the Holy Spirit and are no different than other non Christian faith based or secular organizations.

2)The Gifts of the Spirit are to help evangelize the world with signs wonders and miracles and not just good works programs, humanitarian efforts, community service, etc. alone.

Mark 16:15-18 in the Amplified Bible says; *“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed [in Me] and has been baptized will be saved [from the penalty of God’s wrath and judgment]; but he who has not believed will be condemned. These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink anything deadly, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will get well.”*

Let's look at our fearless leader, Jesus, who set the example for those he commissioned. Jesus isn't telling you to do something he hasn't done already and he also says that you will do greater signs!

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I'd like to share this chart with you from a document we found on the internet. I'll give you the link below to read more statistics.

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Total number of healings	29	26	29	9
Casting out of demons	11	13	15	0
% of demon casting vs. overall healings	37%	50%	52%	0%

Let's look now to a standard medical response to illnesses and these are just a few examples. Please click on the link to read the full document.

STANDARD MEDICAL RESPONSE	CONDITION	JESUS' METHOD
Isolation	Leprosy	Healed/Cured – Mt. 8:2-4
Family doctor prescribing antipyretics (ie: ibuprofen & aspirin,)	Fever	Healed/Cured – Mt. 8:14-15
Institutionalized – mental hospital	Demonized	Healed/Cured – Lk. 8:2
Custom wheelchair	Paralyzed	Healed/Cured – Mt. 9:2-7
Drugs	Hemorrhage	Healed/Cured – Mk. 5:22-29
Cochlear implants, hearing aids, sign language	Deaf	Healed/Cured – Mk.7:31-37
Brail, walking sticks	Blind	Healed/Cured – Mt. 9:27-31
Artificial life support	Death	Healed/Cured – Mt. 9:23-25
Sign language	Mute	Healed/Cured – Mt. 9:32-33
Drugs & surgeries	EVERY sickness/disease	Healed/Cured – Mt. 9:35

Here is the link that you can go to for downloading the PDF document onto your PC or mobile device. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and you'll see; Jesus Deliverance and Healings.

<http://www.scripturesforamerica.org/PDF/JesusDeliverancandHealings.pdf>

3)The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given for the edification of the Church. No matter what gift or gifts you have and operate in, should be for the edification of the body of Christ, the church.

1 Corinthians 14:1-5 says; *“Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. 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. But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. 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.”*

1 Corinthians 14:12 says; *“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 14:26 also says; *“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.”*

4)The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to the church for the purpose of delivering them from evil.

Almost all of the gifts of the spirit, words of wisdom, knowledge, healing, miracles, and the gift of faith are all there to help provide deliverance for the people of God no matter what they are facing in life. All the gifts are at your disposal for every situation that you may find yourself in.

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5)The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to help perfect the Church

Ephesians 4:11-14 says; *“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,”*

These gifts will keep you from false doctrines as we just read, from teachers who are walking in error, the Holy Spirit will show you what is truth and will lead you in truth.

I'd encourage you to ask yourself this serious question; are you lukewarm? Have you become indifferent and lukewarm to the things of God and the Holy Spirit? Or, can you honestly say that you're hot for Jesus? Being cold is better than lukewarm. In being lukewarm, Jesus says he'll spit you out of his mouth! So, if being lukewarm is keeping the gifts of the Holy Spirit from operating, then it might be a good idea to ask for forgiveness for being lukewarm, no matter what degree of lukewarmness you find yourself in. Whether it be embracing in secular humanism to creep in and get you into programs that aren't of the Lord, or the religious system to dictate to you that you have no need for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, or lukewarm in serving Jesus with all your heart, or lukewarm in your love walk, or reading and studying the Bible.

Is there a reason why we don't see a manifestation of the Holy Spirit and his gifts in our churches in the province, country and around the world? Is it because the church is lukewarm? Is it possible...that Jesus will spit them out of his mouth like he warned the Laodicean church that he would do? Jesus said that *“Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—.”* Is that what he's saying to his end-time church today? To operate in the natural instead of the supernatural. Something to ponder on and seriously think about.