

## HOLY SPIRIT POWER

June 24th, 2018 - Holy Spirit Power

Part 10

The gift of Discerning of Spirits is this week's message theme. This gift enables you to identify the character and nature of spirits both seen and unseen. These consist of angel spirits, demon or satanic spirits, human spirits and the Spirit of God. The purpose of the gift is to open the doorway into the spiritual world and how to discern between good and evil spirits.

Before Paul the Apostle's conversion to Christ, he was one of the main instigators of the persecution of the early Christians and was ruthless in carrying out evil actions to all he found. In **Acts 9:3-7** it says; *"As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' And he said, 'Who are You, Lord?' Then the Lord said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' So he, trembling and astonished, said, 'Lord, what do You want me to do?' Then the Lord said to him, 'Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.' And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank."*

Here, Saul saw and heard in a vision from the Lord Jesus what the others who were with him could not see but they heard a voice. Saul had the discernment of spirits in operation. The gift of discerning of spirits is given to see in the spirit world and perceive spirit beings. It's a gift.

In the Old Testament we read about the Prophet Elisha's servant, who sees in the spirit and discerns angelic spirits as we read about in **2 Kings 6:15-18**; *"And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, 'Alas, my master! What shall we do?' So he answered, 'Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.' And Elisha prayed, and said, 'Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.' Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. So when the Syrians came down to him, Elisha prayed to the Lord, and said, 'Strike this people, I pray, with blindness.' And He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha."*

Elisha's servant's eyes were opened to the spirit realm so he could see in the spirit the heavenly host of angels that were doing battle for them. We need to remember here again, these are gifts given by the Holy Spirit as he chooses, not as you choose. It's for specific times, seasons, places and people as the Holy Spirit knows and gives.

This gift is given: **to discern evil spirits.** We read about it in **1 John 4:1-3**; *"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world."*

With the purpose of deceiving Christians, evil spirits will fake to be Gods Spirit. They will counterfeit the truth. Jesus always revealed evil spirits and cast them out of those they possessed. We read about this in **Mark 1:34**; *"Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him."*

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**Matthew 12:22** also says; *“Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.”*

After the disciples returned with awe and excitement after casting out demons, healing the sick with many other attesting miracles, Jesus keeps things in perspective where says in **Luke 10:18** *“And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.”* Remember, from the beginning of time, Jesus saw one-third of the angels cast out of heaven together with Lucifer when he rebelled against God and incited insurrection in heaven.

Casting out evil spirits was just a normal walk in the park for Jesus and should be the same for you and me as we allow the gift of discernment of spirits to operate in our lives. Remember, the same Jesus that cast out demons (fallen angels) and saw that one-third of angels cast out ... lives in you! He hasn't changed.

In **Acts 16:16-19** we read about what happened to Paul and Silas who are imprisoned as a result of discerning an evil spirit in a woman and casting it out. It says; *“Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, “These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation.” And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And he came out that very hour. But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities.”*

The business of divination and magic arts to make money was exposed by discerning of evil spirits and is a good example of the Paul operating in the gift, discerning the evil spirit that was faking to be of Gods Spirit.

This gift is given **to discern evil and hypocrisy amongst Gods people**. This gift is needed in the church today to keep it clean of evil spirits that counterfeit to be of God. Paul, speaking about false apostles in **2 Corinthians 11:12-15** says; *“But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”*

The Apostle John says in **1 John 3:8-8**; *“He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”*

Originally man was intended to be a citizen of two worlds, heaven and earth, like Adam and Eve who lived a natural life on earth but also a supernatural life, when in the cool of the day, God would come down and commune with them. How supernatural is that! Spirit God coming to have fellowship with his creation – Adam and Eve. Face to face communion. Adam and Eve had the best of both worlds, the natural and supernatural.

After the fall of them in the garden, a veil was put between God and Man because of sin, now limiting the once supernatural to a more natural walk with God.

The gift of discerning of spirits gives us the ability to get a glimpse into the spirit realm that once was just a normal walk in the garden for Adam and Eve and although we are now redeemed through the salvation of our souls by what Jesus did when he died for our sins, becoming born again spiritually, our citizenship of heavens spirit world on earth has not been fully restored. The gift of discerning of spirits opens up this spirit realm again. It discerns what's of God, the devil or the human spirit, to help you discern right from wrong and truth from lies.

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Talking about heavenly angels, we read in **Hebrews 1:13-14** where it says; *“But to which of the angels has He ever said: ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool’? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?”*

Everyone is assigned an angel as Jesus says in **Matthew 18:10**; *“Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.”*

When Adam and Eve were kicked out of the Garden of Eden an angel was put on guard of the Tree of Life so they could not eat of this tree. We read this in **Genesis 3:24**; *“So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.”*

But now we as Christians, have been given a new access to the tree of life through Jesus and his salvation plan and now the angels are commissioned to not keep us away from the tree of life but rather protect us until the day that we actually partake of its fruit in heaven. We read this in **Revelation 2:7**; *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”*

So thru being born again of his Spirit we have dual citizenship on earth and in heaven, with the heavenly citizenship being revealed to us through the Gifts of the Spirit in a supernatural demonstration in the natural realm we live in. It should be the norm for us now to hear and see in the Spirit, things that we wouldn't see or hear in the natural realm.

**Hebrews 13:2** says; *“Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.”* In the Old Testament, angels for the most part resembled the image of man. Abraham was visited by the Lord and 2 angels that told him about his wife Sarah having a child when they were both beyond age to have one. You can read it in [Genesis 18:1-15](#).

Abraham's great faith that marked his life, had a lot to do with these supernatural visits from angels and the abode that all Old Testament saints went to when they died, was named after him and it was called Abraham's bosom.

Here are some other examples of visitations where men became citizens of two worlds.

The first is **Joshua 5:13-14** where it says; *“And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, ‘Are You for us or for our adversaries?’” So He said, “No, but as Commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, “What does my Lord say to His servant?”*

Here we see Jesus, the Commander of his army, revealing himself physically to Joshua in a time of need. Likewise we need the gift of discernment when the heavens open up in the spirit and give us an open vision.

Second, we see Gideon who had a supernatural visitation from an angel which gave him the courage that he didn't have to battle the Midianites. You can read about it in [Judges 6:11-23](#).

Thirdly, there is the story of how angels cohabited with women on earth which gave birth to the Nephilim race of giants. It says in **Genesis 6:1-4**; *“When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the Lord said, ‘My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.’” The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the*

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*daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown."*

It's pretty obvious that these angels appeared unto the women on earth in flesh as humans and conceived children with them. These women obviously did not have the gift of discernment to recognize that they were fallen angels. There is a society, the Smithsonian Institute, that is keeping these discoveries hidden. If they were revealed, the theory of Darwinism and Evolution would be confronted as false, as Creation given the legitimacy in it's truth. You can go to dinosaur museums which support the theory of Evolution, but, you don't see the remains of the Nephilim giant race that would support creation which is found in the Bible.

How many Christians today are in bed with the devil spiritually, becoming spiritually impregnated and are giving birth to all sorts of false teaching and lying spirits? **1 Timothy 4:1-5** says; "*Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."*

The Apostle Peter also says in **1 Peter 5:8**; "*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."* This is why we need the gift of discernment! To discern not only good, but evil, and the keep us away from deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons!

**1 John 4:1-3** says; "*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world."*

There is a generation of preachers who are seducing Christians, teaching them doctrines of demons. Without the gift of discernment of spirits, you can end up listening to fallen angels counterfeiting as angels of light. There are ministries who focus a lot on the worship of angels, entertaining them, conversing with them by name, but if there is no discerning of spirits, who knows if they're in communication with a heavenly angel, or a fallen angel of light masquerading as good? We can't think that this isn't happening. This is not negating angelic visitations because they are very real and very amazing! But...we need discernment.

Had Eve discerned and known who was tempting her, she would have fled from the serpent. How many Christians today are under the influence of the same tempter and not knowing who he really is? You can sure understand why the devil has done such a good job at keeping the gifts of the Spirit from manifesting in most Church's because it keeps him from being exposed, be it in the pulpit or in pew. If he can keep the gifts under wrap, he'll keep the Christians operating in the natural realm.

**Ephesians 6:12** says; "*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."* If this where our battle is, we need to discern the spirits then behind the battle.

We, as the church, need to always keep in perspective that we have these invisible forces to help us fight our battles in the spirit. That's why we need this gift of discernment to perceive the true supernatural forces that are available to help us fight the good fight of faith.

More angelic visitations are mentioned in [Luke 1:11-22](#) where an angel appeared to Zacharias announcing to him that his wife would conceive a son and his name would be called John. We know him as John the Baptist.

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An angel appeared to Mary announcing her to become the virgin mother of Jesus. We read it in [Luke 1:26-38](#). There have been big moments in history where angels appear to announce major events to come.

The Apostles are set free from prison by an angel as we read in **Acts 5:17-20**; *“Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, “Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.”*

How would you like that to happen to you some time? And it just might as the Holy Spirit would deem necessary. This is the supernatural that as Holy Spirit filled Christians we can expect – just as Jesus supernaturally walked on the earth, he sent the Holy Spirit to fill us in the same way – to walk supernaturally! The devil has made it out to be ‘abnormal’ in nominal Christianity today though hasn’t he. But without the manifestation of these gifts, the devil has nominal Christians where he wants them to be – oblivious, blind, unbelieving and faithless.

Another angelic appearance is to Paul on a ship in a storm as we read in **Acts 27:23-24**; *“For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, saying, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.’”* This was after 14 days without food, being tossed in a wild Mediterranean Sea storm! I’d be encouraged too if it would have been me!

It was the gift of discernment in both the Old and New Testament that opened up the door to unveil the supernatural beings in the unseen world which strengthened and encouraged them to do great things for God that they could not have done in the natural.

The Discerning of Spirits is closely related to the ministry of healing. Either directly or indirectly, the cause of all sickness is from satan. In Paul’s first sermon to the Gentiles he declares that sickness is caused by the oppression of Satan and Christ destroyed his works. He says this in **Acts 10:38**; *“...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.”*

In **Luke 13:16**, Jesus states that the woman bowed over for 18 years was the work of satan. He says; *“So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?”*

Sickness caused by evil spirits is not always the case, but if it is the case of possession, there will be no healing until the demon is cast out. This needs to be clear. **All** sickness is from satan and can be healed in Jesus name, but when there is a demonic spirit of infirmity through demonic possession, it has to be cast out first before healing occurs.

Many kinds of evil spirits exist. We see the **spirit of infirmity** in **Luke 13:11** that we just alluded to with Jesus healing. It says; *“and behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.”*

There’s a **deaf and dumb spirit** as we read in **Mark 9:25**; *“When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!”*

There’s a **blind spirit** as we read in **Matthew 12:22**; *“Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.”*

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We need to remember that we can't look at these things logistically. So many people reason infirmity to be generational – which it can be. You've heard someone say that their great-grandmother had, their grand-mother had it and their mother had it and now they have it. It's very probable that it's a generational spirit that has been handed down. This is the point here. The gift of discernment will reveal what is transpiring.

There's a murderous spirit as we read in **1 Samuel 18:9-11**; *“So Saul eyed David from that day forward. And it happened on the next day that the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied inside the house. So David played music with his hand, as at other times; but there was a spear in Saul's hand. And Saul cast the spear, for he said, “I will pin David to the wall!” But David escaped his presence twice.”*

How many people are in prison today that have a spirit of murder in them? They aren't delivered just because there in jail either. Until they are prayed for and have received deliverance, they're still tormented with it.

There's an epileptic spirit. It may be more than genetic – which Jesus took a strip for so that person can be healed too. We read deliverance from an epileptic spirit in **Luke 9:39** where it says; *“And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams at the mouth; and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him.”*

There's an insane spirit as we read in **Luke 8:29**; *“For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.”*

How many people are in psychiatric wards today, insane – never changing because they're possessed with an evil spirit that they never received deliverance from. They're treated in the flesh, treated with medication, treated with council and yet nothing works. Why? Because that spirit is still possession them.

There's an unclean spirit also as we read in **Mark 1:23**; *“Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out.”*

The Spirit of Discernment in healing will give understanding of the demon or demons that need to be cast out in order for them to be totally healed. This gift will reveal if it's sickness only or if there is demonic possession. How will you know what you're dealing with unless you have the Spirit of Discernment in operation? In praying for people, the Holy Spirit will reveal what is needed. All these gifts are available to you to live and move in the supernatural to be a vessel in God's hands to see so many set free, delivered, healed and edified. Don't limit yourself to the natural tangible life. Live in the supernatural life that Jesus has redeemed us back to like Adam and Eve. These are glimpses that the Holy Spirit is enabling us to walk in...it sure is better than none, right!

I'd like to end on one statement that I'm sure you've heard: “You're just so heavenly minded that you're no earthly good”. What an oxymoron statement! As a Christian, how's it possible that if your mind is so set on things above, and you're walking in the power of Holy Spirit ... that you can be no earthly good?