

**FELLOWSHIP WITH
THE HOLY
SPIRIT**

2COR 13:14

REV. A. N. SHITANDA

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DEDICATION

To the members of the body of christ. Acts 2:4

Word of life christian Fellowship-Muyayi

Word of life christian Fellowship-Lurambi

Word of life christian fellowship-Bungoma

My Bishop Justus Ochuro

My wife Janet Nekesa Mukhwana

My children Michael Baraka, Jemimah Shimuli, Hephzibah
Khalayi, Emmanuel Shalom.

FORWARD

I'm so much touched to express my concern that much of the body of Christ is not at its right position because it has not completely engaged the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised it. There are very few signs and miracles today. This implies that the believers have not completely applied the Holy Spirit to the level of manifestation of the power of God. God operates on earth mainly through the Holy Spirit. When believers pray less, they limit the operation of the Holy Spirit. The word of God becomes rare. Visions and prophecies come about when believers pray and especially with fasting. Prayer and fasting activate the operation of the Holy Spirit. When Jesus was crucified, all was finished. All the problems facing man got a solution through the cross. Jesus resurrected from the grave and this was by the power of the Holy Spirit. The believers now should have the power over principalities, witchcraft, powers of darkness.

Col 2:13- God has delivered us from the powers of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear son.

When a lot of evil happens in a place, it means that believers are not praying so much and the Holy Spirit is not dominating.

The Holy Spirit is there to prepare the church for the second coming of Jesus Christ. When the Holy Spirit is neglected, there is very little we can do to get ready for the coming back of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit will cause believers to hate evil and to love the things of God. The love for God has deteriorated because most believers don't have the Holy Spirit to make them love him. The

Christians shall be able to serve God with spiritual gifts. The Christians will be able to grow spiritually. This will cause the gifting of ministry gifts like apostles, teachers, evangelists, prophets and pastors.

Time has come for the church to embrace the Holy Spirit to enable it to take its right position and start to rule with Christ.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The greatest gift that Jesus Christ asked God to give the church is the Holy Spirit. He is the one that caused the church to be born in power and glory. Since the ascension of Jesus, the church has continued to grow and to spread the word of God. The apostles preached the word of God as the lord confirmed the word through signs and miracles. This was by the operation of God in the Holy Spirit. The church has been able to stand against powers of darkness, principalities and antichrist. The Holy Spirit has given the church the fire to continue burning and proclaiming the love of God to mankind.

The Holy Spirit removes darkness and brings light to the people of God. In the beginning, when God created the earth and the heavens, there was deep darkness on the face of the earth but the spirit of God moved upon the waters and God spoke that let there be light. The spirit of God moving upon the waters signified the beginning of life. We shall only receive light, breakthroughs when the Holy Spirit is present. The Holy Spirit is God himself manifesting on the earth. God was able to create light under the influence of the Holy Spirit. The Christians shall be able to create and prophecy victory only under the influence of the Holy Spirit. He is the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised the church that will make believers overcome darkness, poverty, sickness, demon possession, premature death, power of sin. We need this helper to overcome all the darkness of the devil. The Holy Spirit upon our lives will cause the believers to prophecy victory of the lord and to come out of darkness.

Romans 8:2 –*For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death.*

Gen 1:1-3 *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

2- *And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

3- *And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

Jesus said it was right for him to leave so that the Holy Spirit may come. He said that when the Holy Spirit will have come, Jesus will be with us. The Holy Spirit created an opportunity for the functioning of Jesus to be everywhere at the same time without limitation. John 14: 16-18. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the church gives the ability to hear the voice of God. He opens the spiritual understanding to believers. He opens the door for the interaction between God and man on earth. The church is able to know the will of God by the help of the Holy Spirit.

Rom 8:27-*And he that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*

The Holy Spirit activates our spiritual senses and helps man to connect to the supernatural. Holy Spirit creates a personal bridge from heaven to earth. It has become easier for the interaction between the spiritual and the flesh. The Holy Spirit matching with the flesh produces the victory of God in our lives. The Holy Spirit activates the communication in the spirit realm to mankind. Most of the things that God has done on earth is by the

Holy spirit. God raised Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus ascended to heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was born by the power of the Holy Spirit.

When the believers do not embrace the Holy Spirit, it means that they have limited the functioning of God the father and Jesus in their lives. The operation of God on earth today is by the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised the church. The Holy Spirit creates an environment for the indwelling of God the father and God the son in us. A church without the Holy Spirit is a church without God. Holy Spirit reveals God's presence in our lives. Holy Spirit makes understanding of scripture. All the revelations of the word of God are through the power of the holy spirit. Most believers love the word of God and yet they don't embrace the holy spirit in their lives. For us believers to get great transformation in our lives, we need to love the word of God and fellowship with the holy spirit every day.

2Tim 3: 16- All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2pet 1:21-For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The Holy spirit convicts the world of its sin. When believers pray for people to get saved the Holy Spirit comes down and touches lives in a place to repent and turn away from their wicked ways. Criminals, harlots, murderers and other sinful people are able to come to Jesus and turn away from their wicked ways by the help of the Holy Spirit. Leaders in a society

including national leaders can lead a nation well under the control of the Holy Spirit. When Saul became a king of Israel, the Holy Spirit came upon him and he was able to prophecy. A society will live in peace under the influence of the Holy Spirit. People need the Holy Spirit at their place of work, in their businesses, in their homes.

CHAPTER TWO

HOLY SPIRIT AND JESUS

The birth of Jesus was the manifestation of God in the flesh through the Holy Spirit. Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The life of Jesus can be divided into three parts in this relationship with the Holy Spirit. First, Jesus is conceived by the Spirit in Mary's womb (Luke 1:35). Then, He is empowered by the Spirit at the Jordan River. Finally, He receives the Spirit at His ascension in order to pour out the Spirit upon His church.

Incarnation

In Luke 1:35 an angel Gabriel says to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God." In Matthew 1:18, 20 we learn that "Mary ... was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit." and that "... that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit."

What does this imply? It implies that a human nature was miraculously wrought by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, formed in perfect holiness. The Holy Spirit is the person of the Trinity whose role it is to deal directly with men. And so, it shouldn't surprise us that the Spirit is the One who comes and does this miraculous deed. This was the transition of the incarnation: The Son of God becoming the Son of Man.

Baptism

But another transition happened when Jesus was thirty years old. Up until that point Jesus had done no preaching, he had performed no miracles. Except for the fact that He was morally perfect, he had lived a rather normal life. But now He is ready to transition into His public ministry, and we come to the next great Holy Spirit event in the life of Jesus. Luke 3:21-22 tells the story: "Now it came about when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased, hear him." This was the time when God presented Jesus to mankind of his divine mission. Jesus could do nothing without the Holy Spirit. After this something has changed. From this point on Jesus is spoken of as being led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Luke 4:1 picks up the story, "And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led about by the Spirit in the wilderness." Luke 4:14 says, "And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit; and news about Him spread through the entire surrounding district." And in Luke 4:18 Jesus Himself says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden." From this point on we see that the whole life of Jesus is lived in the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is interesting that as soon as He received the Spirit, He went in the wilderness and after forty days and forty nights he was anointed by the holy spirit and began to do miracles: healing, casting out demons, etc. (Luke 4:33-41) *and in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice,*

34 Saying, let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.

35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, what a word is this! for with authority and power he rebuked the unclean spirits, and they come out.

37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

38 And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

40 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

Even the strength to face death came through the Holy Spirit, for in Hebrews 9:14 we read, "**...how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**" Jesus was also raised from the dead by the power of the Spirit (see 1 Peter 3:18, and 8:11).

Rom. 1:4 -And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

After the resurrection, He continued to minister by the power of the Holy Spirit. For example, Acts 1:2 refers to "**the day when He was taken up, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.**"

And Jesus said greater works were to be done by the disciples because He was going to the father for the comforter to come. So, church members without the Holy Spirit may not have the ability to overcome powers of darkness.

It is also interesting to note that God had told John the Baptist how to recognize the coming "anointed one": it was the One who was anointed by the Spirit:

John 1:32-33 "And John bore witness saying, 'I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He [the Spirit] remained upon Him [Jesus]. And I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me," He

upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit." "Remaining upon Him" in this verse is very significant. Up until now the Spirit had come in whatever measure was necessary for whatever time was needed for a certain task to be done. But now He comes and remains. And now He comes without measure: John 3:34 says *"For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit [to Him] without measure."*

What's going on here? What does it mean that Jesus was filled with the Spirit? Why did Jesus need the Holy Spirit? It wasn't in terms of personal righteousness. Jesus was perfect. It was in terms of power. It was to equip Him with supernatural powers for His great work.

It was by the Spirit's power that He performed signs and wonders (Matt. 12:28; Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38), it was by the Spirit's power that He cast out demons (Matthew 12:28), and it was by the power of the Spirit that He proclaimed the gospel (Luke 4:18; Matt. 12:18; Acts 1:2). Just as He was directed not by His own agenda, but by His Father's (John 5:19-20,30; 8:26-29,42; 14:10,24), so He was driven not by His own power, but by the Spirit's. Jesus was sent to earth by the Father with a mission to fulfill. When the time for the mission arrived, God gave Him the Spirit to empower Him to fulfill the mission.

Luke 4:18-The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

But why would the Son of God need the power of the Holy Spirit? It was not the divinity of Jesus but His humanity that was being anointed and that needed the power of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 10:38 Peter says, "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him." When it says "God anointed Him" it literally means, "God made Him Messiah." This is the same thing that is happening in Luke 4:18: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden..." (See also Acts 4:27.)

At the moment of His baptism, in one sense, Jesus became the "anointed one," i.e., the Messiah. Now He is referred to as the Christ before this (e.g. Matt.2:4, Luke 2:11), but even those designations seem to be pointing primarily ahead to this point when He would be anointed by the Holy Spirit at the Jordan. Jesus was the One promised of old who would receive the Holy Spirit in a peculiar way. Centuries of human history had proven that man on his own strength could not be what he needed to be. But now a Man was sent who was not going to live by human power but by the power of God's Spirit. And in this way, He would succeed where all the others had failed.

When Jesus had been alive for about 30 years, the Kingdom of God was still something future for John the Baptist. But once the Spirit had come upon Jesus, all attention turned to Him and the time was now fulfilled. In the Old Testament, God had promised David that his son would be king of Israel, and that his son's kingdom would be an everlasting one. Now, Jesus, the Son

of David (Matt. 1:1, 21:9), is anointed as King of Israel in fulfillment of this Davidic promise. So, in one sense when the King was anointed it marked the coming of the Kingdom. (Probably this anointing was also for the offices of prophet and priest - see Heb. 5:5-6; it is very interesting that Jesus did not function in any of these three roles until after His baptism by John.)

And so Christ's baptism in the Spirit at the Jordan was not only a change in Jesus Himself in terms of empowering. It was also a change in salvation history. A new creation had begun, a new covenant was being established, a new age was entered into. At His baptism Jesus entered into a new age, an age into which He would eventually lead His people at Pentecost.

Pentecost

All through the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus Himself, there was an expectation that at some point in the future Jesus would give the Holy Spirit to His followers. Each gospel includes verses like Luke 3:16 where John the Baptist says, "*As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*" And Jesus continued this theme that John began. Just ten days before Pentecost He said to His disciples, "*John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.*" (Acts 1:5, Acts 11:16)

Well, on the day of Pentecost what had been long anticipated finally happened. The disciples were baptized with the Holy Spirit. Speaking of Jesus, Peter declared to the gathering crowd at the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost, "*having been*

exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear." (Acts 2:33)

As one reward for the successful completion of the mission Christ was given the Holy Spirit to pour out on His followers to empower them to continue to fulfill the task that He had begun. The pouring out of the Holy Spirit must be viewed as part of Christ's work, just like His teaching and His miracles and His atoning death and His resurrection and His ascension. In fact, in many ways it is the climax of all He came to do. It is what all the rest was for. Just as the Spirit came down upon Christ's physical body at the Jordan, now Christ pours the Spirit down upon His churchly body at Pentecost. What Jordan was to Christ, Pentecost was to Christ's followers.

Jesus and the Ministry of the Holy Spirit

We have talked about the Holy Spirit's role in the ministry of Christ; let's now talk about Christ's role in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's role is to glorify and confirm Christ to His people. We see that clearly in the words Jesus spoke in John 16:12-14 ***"I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you."*** (John 15:26 where Jesus says of the Spirit that "He will bear witness of Me.")

Christ with/in Us Today through the Holy Spirit

In John 14:16-20 Jesus says, "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you will behold Me; because I live, you shall live also. In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you."

Jesus is talking about the fact that after His ascension to heaven He will be with His disciples through the Holy Spirit. In John 14:20 He says to His disciples, "In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you." After the Holy Spirit comes, they will know three things:

That Christ is in them through the Holy Spirit

In the familiar words of Matthew 28:20 Jesus says, "...lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." How is Jesus with us until the end of the age? Once again, it is through the Spirit. Galatians 2:20 says, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me." How does Christ live in us? Through the Holy Spirit! In two places the Holy Spirit is actually referred to as "the Spirit of Christ" (Romans 8:9 and 1Pet.1:11). 1Corinthians 15:45 says it this way: "So also it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living soul.' The last Adam became a life-giving spirit." Jesus is referred to as a life-giving spirit. What does this mean? Jesus lived His life and now comes back to us, not in body but in Spirit, that is, in the Holy Spirit, who is the giver of spiritual life to us.

If Jesus needed the Spirit, how much more do we! This helps us to see how much our lives are supposed to involve the Holy Spirit. Perhaps some readers have concerns such as this: Does all this talk about the Holy Spirit diminish our focus on Jesus? Isn't Jesus the One that really matters? Aren't Christians who talk all the time about the Holy Spirit just asking for more than Jesus? If focusing on the Holy Spirit distracts a Christian from Jesus, then it is not the Spirit working at all. When the Spirit works, He points to Jesus. There are not Holy-Spirit-empowered Christians and Christ-centered Christians. When the Holy Spirit gets hold of a Christian, he makes him a Christ-centered Christian. The person who thinks most highly of Jesus, the one who adores Him and exalts Him and obeys Him the most, is the person who is most filled with the Holy Spirit. And when the Holy Spirit is at work in a person's life, then He will be drawing their attention to Christ and exalting Christ in their eyes.

How do you tell which movements and which churches have more of the Holy Spirit today? It is those which exalt Christ the most. The vast majority of the Holy Spirit's ministry is imperceptible. He doesn't draw attention to Himself. He points to Christ.

Jesus is with us. We have real fellowship with Him. As it says in 1John 1:3, ***"indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."*** There is no difference between the Holy Spirit in you and Jesus in you. Christ is present in us through the Holy Spirit. In fact, it is better for us now than when Jesus walked on the earth. This is what Jesus said in John 16:7: ***"I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I***

will send Him to you." That's how significant the coming of the Holy Spirit is.

The Holy Spirit was manifested to reveal Jesus Christ to the church and to glorify him. The church was to gain power by recognizing what Jesus did at the cross and his resurrection by the power of the Holy Spirit. When Jesus began to preach the people noticed him as one with a lot of authority and power in his preaching. Even the demons obeyed him because he was full of the Holy Spirit. When we are full of the Holy Spirit demons will obey us.

The Holy Spirit is there to testify about Jesus Christ. John 15:26,27.

CHAPTER THREE

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF A BELIEVER

The Holy Spirit is there to strengthen the believer to serve God and live a victorious life. The believer will be able to witness and preach the gospel with boldness and power. A believer is able to discern the things of the spirit by the help of the holy spirit.

1cor 2:14.

But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. He is able to come out of a carnal state to a spiritual state. He will get guidance and direction.

John 16:13.

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

Is 30:21. *And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, this is the way, walk ye in it, when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left.*

John 14 :16-18 *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees him not, neither knows him: but ye know him; for he dwells with you, and shall be in you.*

18 *I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.*

The believer shall be helped by the Holy Spirit to live a righteous life. He will be able to walk in purity and the fear of God.

It is the Holy spirit that will make a believer to have passion for the things of God. He will have the desire to study the word of God, to attend church services and worship God, to pray. The psalmist said, "I was glad when they told me let us go to the house of God."

The believer needs the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. 2cor 13:14. This will make him to be more fruitful, powerful and productive in service to God.

John7: 37-39. ***In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.***

38 *He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

39 *(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, believers are saved, filled, sealed, and sanctified. The Holy Spirit reveals God's thoughts, teaches, and guides believers into all truth, including knowledge of what is to come. The Holy Spirit also helps Christians in their weakness and intercedes for them.

The Holy Spirit Is a Helper Who Teaches and Reminds

In John 14:26 *Jesus told his disciples, “the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you”*

(John 14:2.)

The Holy Spirit provides wise counsel to Christ’s followers. Jesus knew he would be going away and that his followers would need the Holy Spirit as a helper and an advocate to remind them of his teachings.

The Holy Spirit Convicts the World of Sin

Holy Spirit will prove the sin, righteousness, and judgment of the world. *“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment”* (John 16:7-8).

The Holy Spirit Dwells in Believers and Fills Them

The Holy Spirit is God’s presence in the lives of believers.

“Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16).

The Holy Spirit Is a Source of Revelation, Wisdom, and Power

“These are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except for their own spirit

within them? In the same way, no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:10-11).

God gives His followers the Holy Spirit so that we may know Him better. Since the Holy Spirit is God’s Spirit, He knows the thoughts of God and reveals those thoughts to believers. The Holy Spirit opens believers’ eyes to the hope of salvation and the inheritance they have in Christ.

Jesus knew that his disciples would need the power to carry out their mission to be witnesses to the entire world.

Jesus told his disciples, ***“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*** (Acts 1:8)

Christians have access to power, revelation, and wisdom from the Holy Spirit, just as the Apostle Paul wrote to believers in Ephesus,

“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 1:17-20).

The Holy Spirit Guides us to All Truth, Including Knowledge of What Is to Come

The Holy Spirit tells what is yet to come. The Holy Spirit is called the “Spirit of Truth” in John 16:13 because he guides believers into all truth. Jesus told his disciples the Holy Spirit would make known what he hears and would only speak what the Father speaks.

“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you” (John 16:13-15).

The Holy Spirit Gives Spiritual Gifts to Believers

Attributes of the Holy Spirit such as wisdom, knowledge, and power are manifested in the lives of believers for the good of others. More gifts are listed in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11.

The Holy Spirit Is a Seal in the Lives of Believers

In the ancient world, a seal was a “legal signature” attesting ownership and validating what was sealed.

The Holy Spirit is our mark of adoption as God’s children. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to his followers so that they could be confident in their salvation.

Just as you might make a deposit or a down payment on a new car to make sure the salesperson doesn’t sell it to anyone else,

the Holy Spirit is a deposit in our lives confirming the validity of Christ's message and that we belong to Christ.

“And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory” (Ephesians 1:13).

The Holy Spirit Helps in a Christian's Weakness and Intercedes for Them

We all have times we feel weak and don't know what to do. The Holy Spirit helps us line up with God's will during those times by interceding for us.

“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God” (Romans 8:26-27).

The Holy Spirit Makes Believers New and Gives Them Eternal Life

Holy Spirit works in the lives of believers to renew, sanctify, and make us holy. Just as the Holy Spirit raised Christ from the dead, the Holy Spirit will give eternal life to believers in Christ.

“But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from

the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you” (Romans 8:10-11).

The Holy Spirit Sanctifies and Enables Believers to Bear Good Fruit in Their Lives

The work of the Holy Spirit in a Christian’s life is an on-going process of becoming holy through sanctification. Through the conviction and power of the Holy Spirit, believers will not indulge the sinful acts of the flesh (Galatians 5:16-21) but will bear the good fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-25).

Acts 4:31 *“After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”*

Romans 8:14-16 *“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father...’”*

2 Thessalonians 2:13 *“...God chose you as first fruits to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.”*

Titus 3:4-6 *“...He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our saviour.*

The Holy Spirit speaking to our heart:

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, and everyone his brother, saying, 'know the Lord,' for all will know Me, from the least to the greatest of them" (Hebrews 8:10-11).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE WORD OF GOD

The Holy Spirit's presence in the life of the reader is essential to his total understanding, appreciation, and implementation of Scripture (1 Corinthians 2:6-16).

Scripture is normal, logical communication. Still, the man without God's Spirit cannot understand God's Word in the fullest sense, for he does not and cannot have a real appreciation of the spiritual implications of biblical truth, especially in relation to himself. He may grasp the thoughts, but he misses the spirit, the life-changing purpose behind the thoughts. In that sense he comprehends the raw concepts, but he does not truly "see." Hence, the man without the Spirit of God cannot truly understand (fully grasp or appreciate) the things of God.

The Holy Spirit desires to transform and use the mind of the believer in Bible study. He does not desire to discard or bypass it.

"The way of the Spirit is the way of the Word." The Spirit speaks through and in conjunction with the Word. He opens my mind to certain principles, implications, and unique applications of His truth. But the raw material the Holy Spirit uses is the revealed truth itself.

The distance between me and God's revelation is the distance between me and my Bible. I should prayerfully ask for the Holy Spirit's guidance in my biblical study.

The word of God becomes effective when it is accompanied by the Holy Spirit. It is able to cause our physical bodies to yield to righteousness. Heb 4:12.

The spirit of God makes us to obey the word of God. We are able to prophecy by using the word of God. The quality of our lives will depend on how much we have engaged the word of God in our lives. We need to become one with the word of God. John1:1

The word of God gives all the possibilities that dwell in God. The word of God shall not return to God void but it shall accomplish that which God intended. Isaiah 55:11.

The word of God increased in the early church because the believers engaged so much in prayer and fellowship. This is an atmosphere that attracts the presence of the holy spirit. The Holy Spirit causes many to get saved, many signs and miracles occur. The word of God is an engine to a believer and the Holy Spirit is the fuel that will cause us to function powerfully in the spirit realms.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Scripture Is Inspired

For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:20, 21).

Scripture Is Useful

The apostle uses two pairs of words to flesh out Scripture's usefulness – “and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” (v. 16b). The first pair—teaching and reproof—have to do with doctrine. Positively, all Scripture is “profitable for teaching.”

Correction and training in righteousness—have to do with conduct. Those who accept the word's reproof will begin to find their lives straightening out. Then they will be ready for the Word's positive effect of “training in righteousness.” The righteousness that has come to the believer by faith is actualized by the training of God's Word. In sum, the God-breathed Word is “profitable” for all of life, all doctrine and all duty, all creed and all conduct—everything!

Scripture Equips

Paul ends this section on the sufficiency of Scripture by saying, “that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work” (v. 17). The man of God is super-equipped by the Word of God. The man of God is before all else a man of the Bible.

The testimony of God's Holy Word is that it is his breath and that it is everything to believers. The book of Deuteronomy records that when Moses had finished writing the words of the law and had given it to the Levites to place beside the ark and had sung his song, the song of Moses, he said, “Take heart all the words by which I am warning you today, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law. For it is no empty word for you, but your very life” (Deuteronomy 32:46, 47; cf. 31:9–13; 21:1–43).

When Jesus began his ministry and was tempted by Satan, his knowledge of the Word enabled him to defeat the tempter with three deft quotations from Deuteronomy (see Luke 4:1–13; cf. Deuteronomy 8:3; 6:13, 16). Jesus Christ, God incarnate, leaned on the sufficiency of Scripture in his hour of need. Indeed, his summary response to the tempter was like a bookend to Moses’ declaration that the Scriptures are “your life,” for Jesus insisted that they are the soul’s essential food—“It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God’” (Matthew 4:4; cf. Luke 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3).

The Scriptures were life to Moses and food to Jesus. They cannot and must not be anything less to us. They are the very breath of God.

CHAPTER FIVE

SPEAKING IN TONGUES

The spiritual gift of speaking in tongues remains controversial in our day and is a subject deserving of our close attention.

Being baptized in the Holy Spirit does not make one believer better than another. There are no inferior believers in God's Kingdom. But what the Baptism in the Holy Spirit does do is create an advantage. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit and more specifically, speaking in tongues, gives access to greater realms of God which benefits us deeply and those around us profoundly.

The gift of speaking in tongues that continues throughout church history and is so widespread today is the Spirit-prompted ability to pray and praise God in a heavenly dialect, possibly even an angelic language that is not related to anything spoken on earth. The Holy Spirit personally crafts or creates a special and unique language that enables a Christian to speak to God in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. This gift is not a human language that one might encounter in some foreign country, but a Spirit-empowered capacity to speak meaningful words that are only understood by our God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (unless, of course, God provides the interpretation through the one speaking or through another believer.

Speaking in tongues is prayer, praise, and self-edification.

Tongues is also a form of praise (1 Cor. 14:15) and a way in which we give thanks to God (1 Cor. 14:16-17).

Tongues is also a way in which we edify or strengthen ourselves. Paul writes, ***“The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church”*** (1 Cor. 14:4). Self-edification is a good thing, as we are commanded to edify ourselves in Jude 20: ***“But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God.”*** It is good to take whatever steps you can to edify yourself, to build up and strengthen your soul, so that you might be better able and equipped to build up others (see 1 Cor. 12:7).

Interpreted tongues edify others in the same way prophecy does:

“Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up” (1 Cor. 14:5). If “someone interprets” (1 Cor. 14:5b), then tongues can also serve to strengthen and instruct God’s people.

When you pray in tongues in private, you are most certainly praising God. The person who speaks in tongues is truly praying to God (14:14), praising or worshiping God (14:15b), and thanking God (14:16), all the while his/her “mind” is “unfruitful” (1 Cor. 14:14). By “unfruitful” he means either, “I don’t understand what I am saying,” or “other people don’t understand what I’m saying,” or perhaps both. Paul doesn’t understand what he is praying or how he is giving thanks or in what manner he is worshipping. But praying, praising, and giving thanks is most certainly taking place.

Is it God's will that every Christian speak in tongues?

Paul writes: ***“Now I want you all to speak in tongues”*** (1 Cor. 14:5a).

Those who say “No” appeal to 1 Cor. 7:7 where Paul uses identical language to what is found in 14:5. With regard to his own state of celibacy, Paul writes: “I wish that all were as I myself am.

- When we are speaking in tongues, we are speaking directly to God. Speaking in tongues is the supernatural language given by God to believers thus it is the language of the God's Spirit and His Kingdom. Speaking in tongues gives us spirit to spirit communication with God (Rom. 8:26-27).

This answers the, ‘who am I speaking to when I pray in tongues?’”. When we are speaking in tongues, we are speaking in a language God has given us to speak to him with.

1 Corinthians 14:2 ***“For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God,”***

Tongues is a language the Holy Spirit puts inside us to express to God everything we are unable to put into words because of our human limitations. It is a powerful prayer gift not limited by distance, time, or head knowledge.

- When we speak in tongues, we are speaking mysteries.

Mysteries are invitations into greater depths of God's heart and greater realms of revelation. We begin to get access to these mysteries by praying in the spirit.

1 Corinthians 14:2“... in the spirit he speaks mysteries..Speaking in tongues allows us to access the mysteries of God.

- When we speak in tongues, we strengthen ourselves.

Praying in tongues is the number one way believers strengthen themselves (1 Cor. 14:2).

When we speak in tongues, we are given the ability to strengthen the spirit man.

1 Corinthians 14:4 *“He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself,”*

Jude 20 “But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

- When we speak in tongues, we build capacity for God.

Praying in the spirit widens our capacity for the life of God and builds and strengthens our connection with our spirits and God’s.

The One Thing That Really Matters!

Ephesians 3:16, **19** *“that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man... 19”* ... to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

- When we speak in tongues, we experience personal transformation.

The Holy Spirit has come to not only empower the believer but to make them more like Jesus. Sin's influence weakens as we make room to strengthen our spirits ushering us into the Power of Christ within us. Praying in tongues opens the door to deeper intimacy with God.

Romans 8:29 “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

- Tongues were the visible proof that the disciples received the Holy Spirit (Acts 2).
- Tongues were the sign that Christ's church had been born in both to the Jew (Acts 2) and the Gentile (Acts 10).
- Speaking in tongues is what convinced both Peter and the governing church authority (the Apostles) that the Gentiles are saved and could be saved (Acts 11).
- Speaking in tongues was a vital part of both the Apostle Paul's life and teaching (1 Cor. 14:18).
- Speaking in tongues is tied to the Gospel of Mark's great commission (Mark 16:14–20).
- Speaking in tongues tames the tongue which James says in the most unruly member of the body (James 3:1–12).
- Praying in tongues is always the perfect prayer (Rom. 8:26-27).

Often, when we have a problem, we may not know everything about it or how to resolve it. Hence, we may pray with limited knowledge or understanding about the situation. But if you pray in the Holy Spirit, you are allowing Him to intercede for you. And the Spirit, who is not limited, knows all things. He knows

exactly what the problem is and exactly what you need. He knows how to bring God's best solution into your situation. He is able to plead for you in harmony with God's will and cause everything to work together for good in every area of your life (see Rom. 8:28)!

When we pray in tongues, we could also be prophesying good into our future.

- Praying in tongues releases miraculous intercession for people whom we know and those we don't.
- Praying in tongues is governmental because it accesses the heart of God and prays what He wants to do on earth (Rom. 8:26-27).
- Speaking in tongues can actually lead people to repentance.
- Praying in tongues is the main way we fulfill the mandate to pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17).
- Speaking in tongues is part of our spiritual armor (Eph. 6:18).
- It releases rivers of practical supply and life into your situations.

What is your need today? God has prepared rivers of practical supply to bring healing, life, and provision for all your challenges. As a new covenant believer, you have full access to these rivers of life through the Holy Spirit. When you pray in the Spirit, you release rivers of His wisdom, supply, and healing into your situations.

Are you hard pressed for a decision regarding your family, your job, your relationships, or your finances? Stir up the reservoir of divine wisdom that is dormant on the inside of you, and release rivers of wisdom to bring light and discernment into your situation.

I've found that the more I pray in the Spirit, the more my spirit becomes sensitive to His leading. Similarly, as you practice this gift, you'll become more familiar with sensing the presence or absence of the Lord's peace regarding a matter. And the more you learn to recognize and follow His leading of peace, the more you'll be equipped to make the right decisions, find yourself at the right place at the right time, and experience His protection.

- Now, apart from the river of wisdom, there are many other rivers of power that will impart life to your body or circumstances. There is a river of life for a sound mind, a river of love, another river of rest, yet another river of refreshing—all waiting to be released as you pray in the Spirit. Instead of feeling drained and dry of supply, let His living water flow freely as you consistently practice this powerful gift! Speaking in tongues produces peace within us. He creates stability within us in the midst of difficulties. You become mentally, physically calm.
- Praying in tongues brings our spirit into unity with God's purposes.
- Praying in the Spirit renews our minds.

- He brings divine healing and health to your body and mind
Praying in tongues is a powerful, scriptural way you can experience healing for both your mind and body.
- Praying in tongues builds the interior life of the believer. Jude 1:20–21 encourages us to pray in tongues because it builds us up on our most holy faith and keeps us in the love of God. When you pray in tongues, you are reminding yourself that God is working in you, for you, and through you. You are fortifying your inner man. You are strengthening your faith, and keeping yourself in the Lord’s love for you.
1 Corinthians 14:4—He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself.
- Imagine being constantly surrounded by this powerful shield as you pray in the Spirit while you go about your day. You don’t have to fear the devil’s attacks against you. You can go from faith to faith, walking boldly in the promise that no weapon formed against you or your loved ones shall prosper (see Isa. 54:17)!

Romans 8:26-27 says, “26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered 27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”

CHAPTER SIX

VISIONS, DREAMS AND PROPHECIES

VISIONS

“A vision is something seen otherwise than by natural sight - prophetic sight.”

Visions are basically the same as dreams, except that dreams happen whilst a person is in a state of sleep and visions will happen whilst the person is fully awake.

The reason that Dreams and Visions are prophetic is because they are to do with the visual and seeing aspects of what God is saying.

We “see” our dreams, we “see” visions.

DREAMS FROM GOD

Dreams are also called God’s secret weapon or the sleep language of God.

As created beings, we are created in the image of God. God had a dream of what He wanted the heavens and the earth to look like. He then proceeded to create them according to that dream.

Today God is still dreaming and speaking to His creation through dreams. It is fair to say that every Christian can

probably recall at least one time when they believed that God spoke to them in a dream.

The Holy Spirit is always looking for ears that will listen to what He is saying, eyes that will look at what He is showing and a heart that will enquire after His mind.

In many of the ways that God speaks to His people today He uses dreams and visions as the acceptable media.

Dreams allow us to see things as they really are, not as they appear to be.

“Dream” in the Hebrew – means to “bind strongly or firmly”. A dream from God will become bound up in the heart of the person receiving the dream. Dreams from God are usually very spiritual experiences that are not easily forgotten. They almost become a part of the heart and mind of the person receiving the dream.

If dreams were not so important God would not spend so much of His Word telling us who dreamed, why they had dreams, what He was saying to them in the dreams, and what He did as a result of those dreams.

Dreams are evidence of the movement and operation of the Holy Spirit. Why is this so?

As we read Scripture and read where there are dreams, we also read that God the Holy Spirit was speaking and doing something. We read that God was communicating something to the people in the environment of where the dreams were taking place.

Dreamer Scripture What God was saying / doing.

Abimelech-Genesis 20:3

“Indeed you are a dead man, the woman you have taken is another man’s wife.” God was letting Abimelech know that Sara was not available when Abraham lied to him about her being his sister. God sought to protect Abimelech.

Jacob-Genesis 28:10-13

“I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac.” God was seeking to encourage Jacob about the future.

Laban-Genesis 31:24

“Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.” God was warning Laban that he was to treat Jacob with respect.

Joseph Genesis 37:5

Scripture does not specify that Joseph’s dreams were from God, but the evidence of what happened clearly vindicates God as the source of the dreams.

Pharaoh-Genesis 41:1-13

God spoke to Pharaoh in dreams to tell of the 7 years of plenty and the 7 years of famine that were to come.

Solomon-1 Kings 3:5

God was asking Solomon what it was that he wanted. God was testing Solomon’s heart.

Joseph-Matthew 1:20

“Take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel.”

God was protecting Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

As we see from the above Scriptures, it is not unusual for God to communicate with His people (and even those who are not His people) in and through dreams. Dreams are the chosen way in which God uses to bring to people His plans, will and His purposes.

Clearly God does not need to speak to us in dreams, and can use many forms of media to do so. The most obvious form that being His Word.

However, God has chosen to reveal His will and His character to us through speaking to people in dreams, that certain people were either prophets or had prophetic anointing upon their lives.

As the people of God we are not to be afraid of the fact that God may wish to speak to us on a regular basis through dreams and visions. We can safely embrace dreams and visions, believing by faith that God is desirous to reveal exciting things of the Spirit to us.

We obviously need to discern whether the dream is from God, or the result of our minds having a nightly sort out. If we keep in step and on the same frequency as the Holy Spirit we can discern the interpretation of our dreams quite readily.

THE PURPOSE OF DREAMS:

If we can accept that God chooses to speak in dreams and visions, we can then see the reasons why.

When we are awake, we filter all revelation through our human experiences. Dreams will bypass our experiences of what we think we know and what we have learnt. God chooses to use this media of revelation to cut through agendas of the heart that can cause us to miss out on the valuable things that the Holy Spirit wants to communicate to us.

The book of Job tells us in Job 33:14-18:

“For God may speak in one way or in another. Yet man does not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, whileslumbering on their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction. In order to turn man from his deed, and conceal pride from man, He keeps back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.”

These verses clearly tell us that God speaks to keep a man from being destroyed by his own pride and sin. The mercy of God will be upon a man’s life because of dreams.

Sometimes God will use dreams to show us the content of our own hearts. Jeremiah 17:9 “. . . The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it.”

God may choose to use a dream, or a series of dreams, to reveal weakness in our lives that He wants us to address. He may choose to use them to cause us to assess honestly the content of our own heart. If we choose to listen to God through our

dreams, I do believe that many of us may be spared many a heartache.

Isaiah 55:8. Here God tells us that His ways and thoughts differ immensely from our ways and thoughts. Through dreams God can cause us to bring our thinking and behaviour into line with His own.

REVEALING OF HIS PROPHETS:

Numbers 12:6 – *“if there is a prophet among you, I, The Lord make myself known to him in a vision.”*

God uses dreams to reveal who His prophets are. So that when the man or woman of God says that they have received a dream or vision, then they will know they are a prophet of the Lord – and those around will know also.

Does that mean that if we have a dream from God then we are a prophet? No. What it does mean is that a Prophet will be recognized amongst us because he/they hear from God in dreams and visions.

PROPHETS SEE AND HEAR:

As we read all the major and minor prophets, we see that they open the book they have authored with an introduction about themselves, or an introduction is written about them that relates to the prophets either seeing a vision or hearing the Word of the Lord.

Clear and Biblical evidence that God speaks to His prophets in Dreams and Visions:

Isaiah 1:1 The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz which he saw concerning . . .He saw

Jeremiah 1; 4-The Word of the Lord came to me saying. He heard.

Ezekiel 1:1-In the thirteenth year and the fourth month and the fifth day, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God . . . **He saw**

Daniel 2:19-The secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision . **He saw**

Hosea 1:2-The Lord began to speak to Hosea . . **He heard**

Joel 1:1-The Word of The Lord came to Joel . . . **He heard**

Amos 1:1-The Word of Amos, which he saw . . . **He saw & heard**

Obadiah 1:1-The vision of Obadiah . . . **He saw**

Jonah 1:1-Now the Word of the Lord came to Jonah . . .saying . **He heard**

Micah 1:1-The Word of the Lord came to Micah . **He heard**

Nahum 1:1-The burden against Nineveh the book of the vision of Nahum... **He heard**

Habakkuk 1:1-The burden, which the prophet Habakkuk saw . . . **He saw**

Zephaniah 1:1 -The Word of the Lord which came to Zephaniah . . **He saw**

Hosea 1:2-The Lord began to speak by Hosea . . .
He heard

Haggai 1:1-In the second year of King Darius . . . the Word of the Lord came by Haggai . . **He heard**

Zechariah 1:1-In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the Word of the Lord came to Zechariah . . . **He heard**

Malachi 1-The burden of the Word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi... **He heard**

Dreams and Visions are what are seen in the spirit realm – where the invisible is made visible and the impossible becomes possible.

God also uses dreams to:–

To restrain evil Genesis 20:3

To reveal God's will Genesis 28:11-22

To encourage Judges 7:13-15

To reveal the future Genesis 37:5-10

To instruct Matthew 1:20

To warn Matthew 2:12 Daniel 4

God will use dreams to reveal to the dreamer things of the Spirit that will not be seen by the natural eye.

DREAMS TO UNBELIEVERS:

God can and does speak to unbelievers in dreams.

Genesis 20:3-7 Warning Abimelech that Sara was not a woman that he was free to sleep with.

Genesis 41:1-7 Warning Pharaoh that 7 years of plenty were coming followed by 7 years of famine.

Daniel 2:1 Warning Nebuchadnezzar that he was to fall and lose his kingdom.

Matthew 27:19 Warning Pilate's wife that Jesus was not to be falsely accused.

DISCERNING ORIGINS OF DREAMS:

If we dream every night, then how can we tell which dreams are from God, and which dreams are the result of having a greasy meal before we go to bed, from just the mind sorting out the day's activities?

Firstly, if we are keeping in step with the Holy Spirit and keeping the Word of God in our hearts and mind, then discerning the origins of our dreams will not be a hard thing to do.

As I wake in the morning I know almost instantly if the dream I had in the night is from God, or the makings of my own mind. I

know this because of my walk and relationship with God. I also know by what is happening in my life and ministry, and what I am communing with God about each day, and what He is, in turn, saying to me.

If there is an area of unrepented sin in my life, then God will speak to me in a dream about it. I make sure that I am quick to repent.

If I am praying about an aspect of ministry, and God has given me a dream, then I ask Him for the interpretation. I usually get an interpretation within 24 hours of receiving a dream. For me, the interpretation comes when I speak the dream out. I find that it has to leave me and be spoken out in faith. As I do this the interpretation usually comes instantaneously.

TIP: If you are not sure whether your dream is the substance of your own mind or from God, ask the Lord for His help.

Ask Him to take it away if it is not from Him, and keep it in you and give you the interpretation if it is. God will not fail you and you will know straight away the origin.

INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS:

Listening to the Holy Spirit is the most important aspect of finding the honest interpretation of any dream that we have.

Seeking the interpretation of dreams is only natural and right. This is not divination and not to be confused with such. We are not to seek dreams and interpretations as our ways of getting through life. We are to seek God and His Word.

Dream Interpretation is not listed as a spiritual gift, but clearly a dream given by the Holy Spirit will be interpreted by the Holy Spirit (Genesis 40:8, Daniel 1:17).

The dreams that Pharaoh received in Genesis Chapter 40, were given by God, and God gave Joseph the interpretation. The dream that King Nebuchadnezzar had in the Book of Daniel was given by God, and we see that God gave Daniel the interpretation.

We are to rely on the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to confirm and interpret dreams and visions given to us by God.

God will not give us dreams to amuse us or to stop us relying upon Him and His Word.

Expect that God can and wants to speak to you in dreams and visions.

Seek the Interpretation (Daniel 2:1-3). Ask God the Interpreter of all dreams to reveal the meaning of the dream, its relevance and importance, and what we are to do about what is revealed to us.

Write down the dream in as much detail as you possibly can, and as you seek the interpretation, write that down too.

Weigh the dream and what is believed to be the interpretation. Measure what is revealed with the Word of God. Scripture and verse may not be matching, but if the principle of God's Word and God's character is in the interpretation, then this is a fair signal that it can be trusted.

For example, is God revealing that He wants to be merciful to you or to another person? Is God revealing that He wants to use you to extend kindness to those who have offended you?

Review the context that the dream comes to you in. By that I mean, what is happening in your life at the time of the dream? What are you seeking God for at the time of the dream?

Review the key characters: Is God speaking literally, or is He speaking symbolically?

Apply what is revealed to you in the interpretation. You can trust God that He is always right.

It is best not to call yourself an “interpreter” of dreams until you have been proved and tested in this area, and then, still be learning from the Holy Spirit.

We can only safely interpret others' dreams when we have safely interpreted our own.

Daniel and Joseph were clearly gifted to interpret dreams.

As we walk with God we can learn what He is saying to us by His Spirit.

Interpretations belong to God and are revealed by God (Genesis 40:8).

Just because a dream has a serious warning does not mean that what is warned is planned to come to pass. It is usually that God wants to spare us, or the party concerned, from the matter warned about.

As we pray for guidance and clarity it could be that God will reveal steps that need to be taken to avert the impending disaster.

Many years ago I was going to enter a business partnership with what I thought to be a friend. In a dream God showed me that the person had a hidden agenda and that their heart was not really with me, or for me. God instructed me not to go through with this arrangement. In the end I told the person concerned that it was not right for me to enter this partnership with them. Hindsight reveals that the dream was from God and that I was spared much pain and hardship.

“I have dreamt about a Church leader, what do I do?”

If you have a dream about a Church Leader, then again prayer is the first thing that is to be carried out. If you go to that person in humility and meekness of heart, then not only will they listen to you, but they are more likely to hear what God is saying through you in the dream.

Never go with presumption and haughtiness. What this will seek to do is cause them to be defensive and miss what God is saying to them. God’s message for them needs to be carried with love and sensitivity.

DREAM IN FAITH:

Dreams can be stimulated by faith. Remember Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that God would not only give to him (Daniel) the interpretation, but the contents of the dream also. This was

an act of faith on Daniel's part. Daniel 2:19. We can trust God, we really can!

As we learn to discern the voice of God in dreams and visions, we will see even greater manifestations of God's power in our midst.

Unbelievers are crying out for supernatural experiences. The problem is they are going to the wrong source, and that is why they are getting "messed up".

GOD IS SUPERNATURAL:

He is the monopoly on the supernatural. All that He is supernatural, and all that He has to give is supernatural.

He wants to display His supernatural knowledge, ability and power through His Church, so that the world will see that Jesus Christ is alive.

That is why dreams and visions cut through the agendas of a man's heart and touch the spirit of a man.

HOW GOD USES DREAMS:

Each one of us needs a Dream from God. Our Dreams will keep us going through the storms of life. Our Dreams will keep us able to 'endure as seeing Him Who is invisible' (Hebrews 11:27). Our dreams will keep us from sin.

The Dreams that Joseph had, kept him while he was thrown into the pit because he believed the Dreams were from God; the Dreams kept him from sinning and from sleeping with Potiphar's wife. The Dream of others, namely the baker and butler, were the media that God used to restore Joseph to the

place of honour that God had intended for him (Genesis 41:9-15, 38, 41-44). The Dreams that Joseph had were fulfilled.

God will give Dreams to teach, warn and instruct, not to create suspicion or juicy gossip.

THINGS DREAMS DO:

Provide God's answer (Ezekiel 1:1).

Instruct us in the things of God (Daniel 2:24-45).

Warn us about hidden danger (Matthew 2:12,13,22).

Prevent us from making mistakes (Genesis 20:3-8).

Keep us humble (Daniel 4:14-37; Job 33:14).

Save lives (Matthew 2:3).

Glorify God (Daniel 2:47).

Question: Why did God appear to Solomon in a Dream and not while he was awake?

Answer: Dreams bypass the mind and our own agendas – our spirits never sleep – God's Word is well able to minister to our hearts even when we sleep.

Our destinies are tied up in our Dreams. As we look at the Biblical figures who Dreamed, they were all destined for something. Their Dreams revealed their destinies and, as they kept true to God and their Dreams, their Dreams and destinies were realized or fulfilled in their own lives.

Interpretations – if we ask, seek, knock, the door will be opened (Matthew 7:7). We are to search (Proverbs 25:2).

The New Testament opens with a burst of Dreams and Visions in Matthew and closes with John the revelator's incredible and dramatic Vision of Jesus.

If you are given to Dreams and Visions, share them with humility.

WHAT IS PROPHECY?

Prophecy is a supernatural enabling by the Spirit of God to hear His voice and then deliver the message of what that voice is saying. We get our source directly from the Holy Spirit. Biblical prophecy is speaking the words of God by the unction of the Holy Spirit.

It is the ability to interpret God's word. The ability to foresee what will happen in the future as revealed by God.

WHO CAN PROPHECY?

1 Corinthians 12 talks about the list of spiritual gifts that are available to us when we have the Holy Spirit, so I believe that everybody has the ability to prophesy but not all people will choose to prophesy. Because it's the Holy Spirit that gives us revelation in the first place, all believers can do it. Even if it's a simple picture that is coming directly from God, that can be a profound moment in someone's life.

The scripture also says that there is grace given by the Holy Spirit as He wills (1 Corinthians 12:11). You get a measure of

grace upon your life to operate in that gift. So, for some people, it comes really naturally and other people have to work at it.

We can all operate in the gift of prophecy like we can operate in the gift of healing and wisdom and discernment. If someone is called as a prophet then you're looking at a different function. The prophet function in Ephesians 4 is more of a life call.

I believe true prophets who are walking in the fullness of their call have angelic encounters, they have visions or dreams or both. I'm more of a visions person, I've got a woman on our team, who has more of a dream gift. Prophets will have angelic encounters and the supernatural will be flowing through their life. Not everyone who prophesies accurately is a Prophet.

Prophets should be positioned in the body of Christ, in the local church and operate from being part of a family. I don't believe they should be functioning outside of the local church. It's really good to be commissioned into your call by leadership who recognize the call and anointing in your life.

The other thing to consider is the prophet's realm of influence. Is it a local church influence, or is it a city-wide influence, or is it a global influence?

HOW CAN A CHRISTIAN LEARN TO PROPHECY?

You've got to start with those that are around you. You don't go from zero to prophesying over the nations in five minutes. Scripture says to prophesy in proportion to your faith, so when you start off, you've got a little bit of faith to prophesy and that faith can grow. You also have to build trust in the Holy Spirit

that He will speak to you, and you also have to build your trust in yourself that you hear correctly.

Then get some training, read some books, go to a prophetic training course, get activated, have somebody lay hands on you, to impart the gift of faith to prophesy. That would be the starting point.

HOW ABOUT RESPONDING TO A PROPHECY OVER A GROUP OR CHURCH?

If it's over a church, and you're not in leadership, you don't really have to do anything. It's the leadership's responsibility to take that word and to discuss within the leadership whether they believe that it is the word of the Lord or not. It's about praying, Lord, is this of you, does this witness? The Holy Spirit is so faithful, He'll give you a strong witness if this is definitely God speaking. And he'll give you a strong witness if it's not. He doesn't want you to live in deception, that's not His will, it's not who He is. So, if you ask Him for discernment, He's going to give it to you. He wants us to have understanding. So, pray for wisdom and understanding to know what to do with that word.

That's for a church and for a nation. I think if a national word comes in, then the prophets of that nation have a responsibility to weigh and judge it.

WHAT ELSE IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE PROPHETIC?

I think it's really important that we prophesy from the foundation that God is good. That we prophesy God's redemptive purpose for people, cities, churches and for organizations. If we are called to prophesy, we may also discern

issues, we may discern things that are not right. But if we sit in the place of judging people, then our prophetic utterance will not outwork the purpose to seed in God's will, heart, and word to build, to unlock destiny and set the captives free. We must understand the difference between the discernment gift and the prophecy gift. Just because you discern something, doesn't mean that God gave you that revelation. We must look to the heart of the Father for what He wants to say about that situation.

The true prophets encounter great trials and suffering in the process of bringing the will of God to their fellow men. Jeremiah, conscious of the responsibility of being a prophet, begged God to leave him in peace and to find someone else to do the prophesying (see Jer 1). Under the kings in Israel and Judah the prophets were often executed (Jer 2:30; 26:20-23). Thus, Jesus was able to say: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you...” (Mt 23:37).

In the Old Testament “the Spirit of the Lord” descends on the prophet and he speaks. Thus, there is a close association between the Spirit and the human activity of speaking. The prophets counseled the community of Israel, they rebuked her, they denounced the kings and the wealthy oppressors of the poor, they spoke about the “Messiah” — the mysterious anointed king who would one day come to redeem Israel.

In the New Testament Jesus is vividly described in terms that indicate a Spirit-filled prophet who is mighty in word and deed. Although he does not call himself a prophet explicitly, he is referred to by others a number of times as a great prophet from the Lord. The Holy Spirit is active in his conception (Lk 1:35; Mt 1:20), leads him into the desert to be tempted (Lk 4:1) and

directs him back to Nazareth, his home town, where he proclaims that the prophecy of Isaiah (61:1-2) is now fulfilled in his own person: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor” (Lk 4:18).

Their faith derived from the preaching of the Apostles. It was the Apostles and the other disciples in the primitive Church who saw that Jesus was the fulfillment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament, a point brought out repeatedly in St. Matthew’s Gospel. The prophecies had all come true in Jesus of Nazareth. This meant to them that it was indeed God’s Spirit who had spoken through the prophets in the time of Israel before the coming of Jesus Christ. They gave expression to this conviction and this truth by including in their Creed that the Holy Spirit “spoke through the prophets”.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCERNMENT

The Discernment of Spirits

But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil -(Hebrews 5:14)

What Is Discernment?

Discernment is defined, in the modern secular sense, as “the faculty of discerning; discrimination; acuteness of judgment and understanding”. Fundamentally, discernment is the ability to judge well. Whether its choices we make or the people we interact with, discernment is the gift of recognizing the moral and practical consequences of our decisions.

Discernment has historically been praised as a valuable trait, allowing those who possess it to avoid costly mistakes or misfortune. Furthermore, discernment was primarily a biblical doctrine occurring in the collection of Gifts of the Holy Spirit as the “Gift of Discerning Spirits, the gift to recognize whether or not something is truly from God or in accordance with righteousness.”

The Spiritual Gift of Discernment

The spiritual gift of discernment is also known as the gift of “discernment of spirits” or “distinguishing between spirits.”. The word describes being able to distinguish, discern, judge, or appraise a person, statement, situation, or environment. In the New Testament, it describes the ability to distinguish between

spirits as in 1 Corinthians 12:10, and to discern good and evil as in Hebrews 5:14.

The Holy Spirit gives the gift of discernment to enable certain Christians to clearly recognize and distinguish between the influence of God, Satan, the world, and the flesh in a given situation. The church needs those with this gift to warn believers in times of danger or keep them from being led astray by false teaching.”

According to John of Damascus, the virtue of discernment "is greater than any other virtue; and is the queen and crown of all the virtues".

Discernment in the Bible

Beloved, do not believe every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world -1 John 4:1.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect (Romans 12:2).

But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil (Hebrews 5:14).

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ (Philippians 1:9-10).

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).

To another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:10).

Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people? (1 Kings 3:9).

The gift of discernment is important to every believer to help him or her to distinguish a genuine servant of God and a false prophet with a familiar spirit. Christians can easily be swayed away when they don't have the spirit of discernment. First, a false prophet will easily be identified by his fruits and how he applies the word of God.

CHAPTER EIGHT

OTHER GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

GIFT OF WISDOM

Wisdom is having deep understanding of issues- ‘seeing far’, being perceptive.

What Spiritual Wisdom Shown in a Person Looks Like (James 3:13-15, 17-18)

shown in good conduct (behavior) and in humility.

Wisdom is Pure, Peaceable, Gentle.

Bears good fruit (the fruit of righteousness)

Let it be understood, we are encouraged to pray to God for wisdom. The Lord is the only way we can receive wisdom and grow in wisdom. Prayer needs to be connected in seeking wisdom. We cannot get wisdom without the Lord, and we should daily be seeking the Lord both in prayer and in His word.

James 1:05, “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.”

Proverbs 2:06, “For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.”

Proverbs 8:17, “I love those who love Me, and those who seek Me find Me.”

Scripture also says if one is to bear the fruit of wisdom then we must be righteous. Righteousness and wisdom come together. They are not separate. Spiritual wisdom must be developed through salvation in Jesus Christ. No one is righteous through works alone; we need the atonement sacrifice through Jesus. It is Christ Who makes us righteous.

Psalm 37:20, ***“The mouths of the righteous utter wisdom, and their tongues speak what is just.”***

Spiritual wisdom may not make sense to the world because this is the wisdom that comes from the living God. Those who are not right with the Lord very well could think you are foolish. With this in mind, people who are on the milk (new believers, those who have a lot to learn, those who are ignorant) may not be ready to understand spiritual wisdom, let alone speak wisely.

This is seen with Paul.

(1 Corinthians 2:04-05, ***“My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power.”***

1 Corinthians 2:06-08, ***“Yet when I am among mature believers, I do speak with words of wisdom, but not the kind of wisdom that belongs to this world or to the rulers of this world, who are soon forgotten. No, the wisdom we speak of is the mystery of God—His plan that was previously hidden, even though He made it for our ultimate glory before the world began. But the rulers of this world have not understood it; if they had, they would not have crucified our glorious Lord.”***

There are false teachers who will be proclaimed by others to be wise and have the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is important you understand what true spiritual wisdom from the Holy Spirit looks like, what kind of fruit they need to bear. (Refer to the list shown above)

True spiritual wisdom is often referred to as the fountain of life or a bubbling brook. Wisdom (righteousness) is a food that can feed many. Wisdom is about understanding the word of God. It's the ability to share scripture properly with others. It's a fruit that grows through obedience to Jesus Christ. It is something we all should pray for. (Proverbs 10:21, 13:14, 18:04, James 1).

Wisdom is the intellectual virtue by which the results of reasoning are traced back to their principles (insight) and unified in one vision of the truth by seeing how the whole of creation and of history reflect the power, truth, and love of God. Human wisdom is philosophy. Sacred wisdom is of two kinds (1) the acquired faith-wisdom we call theology, and (2) the Gift of Wisdom which is the perfect flowering of faith..

Wisdom is God-given knowledge, not learned from books, that provides us with a more intimate and joyful insight into God and His mysteries. This gift enables us to better know God and divine things. It can be illustrated by the words of Jesus when He states, "I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike." (Mt 11:25) In other words, there is a type of revelation that no amount of studying can produce as it is directly infused into our soul by God. It allows simple souls to "see with the eyes of God".

The concept of a heavenly wisdom can further be seen in scripture where James contrasts it with earthly wisdom,” Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show his works by a good life in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. Wisdom of this kind does not come down from above but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every foul practice. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure, then peaceable, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits, without inconstancy or insincerity. (James 3:13-17)

Wisdom is the knowledge of Divine things." It allows us to “see things from God’s perspective”. “The gift of wisdom, the principle of a living contemplation that directs action, enables the soul to taste the goodness of God, to see it manifested in all events, even in the most painful, since God permits evil only for a higher good, which we shall see later and which it is sometimes given us to glimpse on earth.” The gift of wisdom enables us to better understand how God will often allow crosses to enter our lives in order to bring about a greater good. We may not comprehend exactly what the greater good is, but we will be more inclined to trust God's judgment. The saints teach us that wisdom is closely related to the virtue of charity. Therefore, the more one loves God, the more capable they are of receiving this gift. And the more that the gift of wisdom increases in the soul, the more capable of loving God one becomes.

The Gift of Wisdom: The Intellect as the "Disciple of Love"

In the Gospel, Our Lord described one of the effects of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, because He is within us, instructs us as Jesus says, "in everything." At first, we are inclined to consider this dimension of the gift of the Holy Spirit in a kind of quantitative sense. There is this great body of knowledge. So much to learn! So many books to read! So much to think about! Through the working of the Holy Spirit, we who have received the indwelling grace will have His assistance in the very difficult task of mastering what is to be learned.

In a qualitative sense the Holy Spirit's presence in us will cause us to look at everything in a new way. Our Lord in the Gospel is really making reference to the gift of Wisdom, the highest of the Holy Spirit's seven gifts. The gift of the Holy Spirit's Wisdom is different from the virtue of wisdom. The virtue of wisdom is something we get by our own hard work, by human effort, while the gift of Wisdom is just that—it's a gift. The gift of Wisdom comes from asking God for it.

It's love that gives the right judgment. And that's how it is in Wisdom.

Here, the object is not grasped by investigation, not by study, not by long hours of pondering the text, but it is delivered over to the docile intellect through love. For in practical judgment, and even more so in Wisdom, we know wisely because we love rightly. It is because the Holy Spirit has poured into us the Love of God (St. Paul said—"the love of God has been poured out in us"). Because the Holy Spirit does that, the loving that is directed to God, by God, and the loving that God directs to all that He has made—because of that loving in us, we are wise with God's own Wisdom.

It is to be related to God and what pertains to Him. You have to do this in such a way that you allow for the right ordering into the ultimate whole. That will happen through study. That is the virtue of wisdom. The gift of Wisdom is a way of seeing all things, a way of seeing that comes from our sharing in God's love.

Another way to say this is to affirm that this gift of Wisdom is having the very heart and mind of

Christ. That's the work of the Holy Spirit throughout salvation history, wherever He is—hovering over the waters in Genesis, hovering over Our Lady at the moment of the Annunciation, hovering over the bread and wine during the Eucharist. It is His job to shape the matter into the Christ form. This is His work in the world. In our being instructed by Him, He shapes our hearts and our minds into the heart and mind of Christ.

Another perspective on the Gift of Wisdom

This Wisdom we ask for, this being instructed in everything by the Holy Spirit, is nothing else than the Wisdom of the cross, the Wisdom that understands everything in the light of the cross. The ultimate meaning of everything you investigate, all of these things find their ultimate meaning in the Cross of Jesus Christ. This is Wisdom.

There are three types of wisdom:

The wisdom of God (I Corinthians 2:6-7) See readings

The wisdom of the world (I Corinthians 2:6) See readings

The wisdom of man (Ecclesiastes 1:16-18) See readings

Wisdom, like the other Gifts of the Holy Spirit, accompanies sanctifying grace, makes a person well-disposed to receive the inspirations and movements of the Holy Spirit, and completes and perfects the virtues of those who receive them.

What is specific to wisdom is that it makes the soul responsive to the Holy Spirit in the contemplation of divine things and in the use of God's ideas to judge both created and divine matters. It affects a filial fear of God, as well as a welcome peace in the heart of man.

Discernment is nourished by the light and strength of the Holy Spirit who evokes everywhere and, in all circumstances, obedience to the faith, the joyous courage of following Jesus, and the gift of wisdom, which judges all things and is judged by no one (see 1 Corinthians 2:15) We ask for the gift of wisdom not only for special undertakings, but to follow God's will, which is a continuous task for the Christian. The whole person is "called to seek and love God 'with all one's heart, and with all one's soul, and with all one's might' (see Deuteronomy 6:5), and one's neighbor as oneself (see Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:37-39)." To do so, we should "never cease to ask the Almighty for the gift of wisdom in the struggles of everyday life (see Wisdom 9:10) With this gift we constantly use God's standards and not ours. The gift of wisdom is one that should be sought eagerly; however, it is not easy to attain. Wisdom is a light that helps guide us through the darkness of this world. When we use wisdom, we learn to make choices based on God's perspective and the needs of other people, rather than our own wants and desires. Wisdom helps us to think and act in ways that allow us to live a life that is pleasing to the one who created us.

The gift of wisdom thus makes us judge everything in relation to God; It reminds us that all that glitters is not gold and that, on the contrary, marvels of grace are to be found under the humblest exteriors, as in the person of many of the saints.

It is the gift of the wisdom of love, which makes us taste and see how good is the Lord. This gift fills our soul with all kinds of goods. The soul then becomes more and more sensitive to the love of God which communicates Himself and attracts everything with strength and mildness. Love which is the source of all that is created, in which everything finds its achievement. This spirit of wisdom allows us to surrender to this love fervently, peacefully and joyfully. It is the gift of the union with God.

1 Corinthians 2:6-7

6 Yet we do speak a wisdom to those who are mature, but not a wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away.

7 Rather, we speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden, which God predetermined before the ages for our glory,

Ecclesiastes 1:16-18

16 Though I said to myself, "Behold, I have become great and stored up wisdom beyond all who were before me in Jerusalem, and my mind has broad experience of wisdom and knowledge";

17 yet when I applied my mind to know wisdom and knowledge, madness and folly, I learned that this also is a chase after wind.

18 For in much wisdom there is much sorrow, and he who stores up knowledge stores up grief.

1 Corinthians 2:15:

15 The spiritual person, however, can judge everything but is not subject to judgment by anyone.

Proverbs 9:10:

10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of the holy is understanding.

GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE

Ability to understand the basic facts about Jesus, His mission and knowledge about spiritual issues. The Word of Knowledge

This first gift I will talk about is the one I believe will manifest the most in your daily life with the Lord.

With God having absolute perfect knowledge on all things, and with us having knowledge levels that are completely imperfect and limited, this means that we all need to receive words of knowledge from the Lord on a very regular and frequent basis in order to be able to safely journey through this life.

As such, I believe the Holy Spirit will really manifest this specific gift with a lot of frequency in your daily life if you can learn how to pick it up from Him when it does come in.

I believe that the Holy Spirit actually manifests this gift a lot more than people realize, but they fail to realize it or pick it up

when it does come their way because they have never been taught that the Holy Spirit can do this for them in the first place.

The Word of Knowledge is simply the Holy Spirit transmitting His specific knowledge to you on something that you would have no ability or means to be able to know about with your own limited intelligence and knowledge levels.

It is supernatural knowledge and insight being given directly to you by the Holy Spirit Himself, not by your own mind or your own intelligence levels.

These words of knowledge that you can receive direct from the Holy Spirit can literally cover an infinite number of things in your daily life.

They can cover anything from something very trivial such as where you may have misplaced your car keys at, to giving your life-saving knowledge on how to solve an impending crisis or emergency.

Here are some specific examples of where you can receive a direct word of knowledge from the Holy Spirit covering just about anything and everything in your daily life:

How to solve a specific problem at your place of employment.

Where you may have misplaced your car keys at.

Knowledge on what a certain Scripture verse may mean and how it can apply to your own personal life.

How to properly witness to an unsaved family member.

How to solve a marital dispute.

How to start up a new business.

Where to look for that next new job if you have just been laid off.

Who God wants you to marry in this life.

How to counsel someone who has just had an impending tragedy hit them full force.

What your specific calling in the Lord is going to be in this life.

Word of knowledge that God wants to heal someone of a specific illness.

As you can see from these kinds of examples, there is literally nothing that the Holy Spirit cannot get into in your own personal life where He can then give you a word of knowledge on how to properly handle something that you are currently dealing with, or give you a word of knowledge to help someone else out with what they may be dealing with on their end.

With our own knowledge levels being so limited, so imperfect, and so incomplete, we all need words of knowledge from the Lord on some kind of regular basis in this life so that we can make it through this life in one piece and get to where we need to go in our divine destinies with Him.

How exactly does the Holy Spirit transmit an actual Word of Knowledge to us? I believe the number one way that He will communicate a Word of Knowledge to us is through the inner knowing.

The Bible say that the Holy Spirit will bear “witness” with our human spirits.

This inner witness is what I call the inner knowing. All of a sudden, you will receive a without-a-doubt type knowing on the knowledge that He is trying to transmit to you. It can come in the form of a thought or an impression on your mind, or possibly come in the form of a vision or a picture in your mind’s eye.

I have found from personal experience that the Holy Spirit loves to communicate knowledge through these pictures, which are really visions in your mind’s eye. These pictures can be used to give you quite a bit of information and knowledge on what He is trying to give you knowledge on.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, and sometimes much more information and knowledge can be conveyed to you by way of a simple picture rather than Him trying to give you all words or sentences, depending on exactly what you are dealing with.

The only problem with these pictures in your mind’s eye is that you have to learn how to discern the difference between when a vision is coming in from the Holy Spirit and when a vision is coming in from your own natural imagination, as your own natural imagination has the power and the ability to conjure up their own mental pictures in your mind’s eyes.

Over time, the Holy Spirit can teach you how to do discern the difference between the two if you would really like for Him to do this for you. This is something that you can learn how to do with Him through a process of trial and error.

Think of the ramifications and the possibilities with just this one special gift alone – that the Holy Spirit Himself can transmit His own divine knowledge to you on something that you cannot solve or figure out on your own.

This is why this particular gift is so important and so needed in this day and age, as most of us are always facing some kind of roadblocks or obstacles on a regular basis in our daily lives.

As such, we all need the knowledge of God flowing through us so we can make it through all of these obstacles, and then get to where we need to go with the Lord and fully accomplish everything that He will like for us to do for Him in this life.

That is why the Bible tells us that “without knowledge” we can perish and go into captivity in this life. And sometimes only the supernatural knowledge of God can help keep us out of harm’s way in this life, since our own knowledge and intelligence levels are so imperfect and so limited.

THE GIFT OF HEALING

Ability, and power to heal all forms of sickness by calling upon the name of Jesus Christ.

Let us turn to 1 Corinthians 12:9, where Paul is listing the gifts or the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. In the last study we looked at the gift of faith and we pointed out that faith is really related to the gifts of healing. We read, "to another faith by the same Spirit and to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit."

Now throughout biblical history, God has manifested His power to heal. In Genesis 17, we find the recording of the healing of Abimelech, his wife, and his maid servants in answer to Abraham's prayer. We find that God gave wonderful promises of healing to the children of Israel.

In Exodus 15:26, God said,

If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.

He is saying, "I am the Lord that healeth thee." He is Jehovah Rapha, the Lord Our Healer.

In Deuteronomy 32:29, God said,

See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.

As David is talking about the wonderful benefits of God in Psalm 103:3, he said,

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.

And then in the New Testament we find that James 5:14-15 says,

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name

of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.

And so, there are promises both in the Old and New Testament of healing.

Again, in the Old Testament we find Miriam, the sister of Moses, was healed of leprosy in answer to the prayer of Moses. Hezekiah was actually healed from a deathbed as the result of prayer. And it is interesting to me that in Leviticus 14, God made provision for the leper in the day of his cleansing. Though leprosy was incurable, God left the opening to heal the leprous person, and thus a way of restoration back into society. This was the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing:

He shall be brought to the priest. And the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper. (Leviticus 14:2-3)

And as we look at the ministry of Jesus, there can be no denial that healing of the sick was one of the dominant factors of His ministry. We read such passages as Matthew 4:23,

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Then in Matthew 9:35,

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

When Jesus sent the disciples out on their mission to preach the kingdom and to heal the sick, He said, And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. (Matthew 9:1-2)

It seemed to be sort of the preaching of the kingdom and the healing of the sick in the ministry of Jesus. And now in the command to His disciples:

And he said unto them, take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart. And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere. (Matthew 9:3-6)

So, the healing of the sick was a dominant part of the ministry of Christ and also of the disciples.

As we go on in the book of Acts when the disciples were telling about Jesus, they said,

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. (Acts 10:38)

But in Acts 5:12-16,

And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they were all with one accord in

Solomon's porch. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Inasmuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed everyone.

After the ascension of Jesus, the ministry of the healing of the sick through the power of the Holy Spirit continued working through the disciples.

Acts 28:8-9 says,

It came to pass that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him. So, when this was done, others also which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed.

There were Old Testament manifestations of God's healing as well as the promises and the declaration that He is the Lord who heals them. And in the New Testament during the ministry of Christ, one of the prominent features of His ministry was the healing of the sick. And then the power was given to the disciples and a prominent aspect of their ministry, when they went out to preach the gospel, was the healing of the sick. Later when Christ ascended into heaven, they went out proclaiming the kingdom of God and again healing was a very important part of their ministry to people.

GIFT OF FAITH

God gives all Christians saving faith.

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 lists a number of spiritual gifts, including the gift of faith: “To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit ...”

The gift of faith enables some people to have an extraordinary amount of faith that God uses to show us His power in ways that create joy and encouragement for others. We might see someone with the gift of faith as a superior Christian, but that is far from the truth.

What The Spiritual Gift of Faith Is

Throughout the Bible, we see people demonstrate supernatural confidence in God’s promises, power, and presence. Their faith equips people to take outlandishly heroic stands for the future of God’s work in the church.

Take a look at the men and women in Hebrews 11. Noah’s faith was an example to his family (who helped build the ark) and ultimately saved humanity from dying out in the flood.

Joshua’s obedience in marching around Jericho showed his men what bold faith looked like, in turn putting God’s faithfulness, power and protection on display for his people and their enemies.

The gift of faith displays God’s power in ways that create joy and encouragement for others.

Through faith, Moses charged bravely into many situations that should have led to death. Every time he dared to step forward on nothing but God's promise of protection, miracles ensued. Not only did he eventually lead the entire population of Israel to freedom, he showed the power of God to thousands of Egyptians as well.

This list of names shows us fascinating stories of odds that were defied through someone's miraculous faith. And here we are, thousands of years later, still reaping the benefits of their extraordinary, supernatural faith.

faith

Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

THE GIFT OF PERFORMING MIRACLES

In 1 Corinthians 12:10, as Paul is continuing the list of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, he speaks about how the Spirit divides to each one of us severally as He wills of those gifts or manifestations. In verse 10 he said, "To another the working of miracles." We have dealt with the gift of faith and the gift of healing and how these two gifts seem to be tied together. Actually, also tied with the gift of faith would be the gift of working of miracles.

A miracle is something that is humanly impossible but divinely simple. Difficulty always has to be measured by the capacity of the agent that is doing the work. When God is the agent doing the work, talk of difficulty is absurd.

Paul the Apostle said to King Agrippa, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8). It is no problem for God to raise the dead. He breathed life into Adam when he was just inanimate matter made out of mud. God breathed life into him and so, for God to raise the dead, as Paul was preaching about the resurrection of Jesus Christ-"Why should you think it a thing incredible that God should raise the dead?"

The Bible, of course, is full of miracles and probably the biggest of these starts in the first verse. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Now if you can buy that, you should not have any trouble with the rest of the book because it gives to you the proper concept of God. He is wise, omnipotent, and powerful-creating the entire universe. A God who is big enough to do that is big enough to do anything.

Many people have difficulty in accepting miracles and it is because they do not accept God. They only think in the realm of the natural and natural phenomena. And they have excluded the supernatural from their thought process. Therefore, when you talk about a miracle, they are naturally skeptical because they do not believe in God, and thus, they have to rationalize or deny all miraculous or supernatural manifestations.

There were many miracles in the life of Moses and the gift of the working of miracles surely was something that Moses possessed. With the Egyptians in Exodus 7, as we mentioned, there was the turning of the river into blood, the flies the boils upon the Egyptians, and then the frogs. And you have to believe that God has some kind of a sense of humor with a plague of frogs as it talked about their frogs being in their beds. And can

you image crawling into bed and having slimy frogs there in your bed. And how they would jump onto the kneading troughs and get into the dough that the women were kneading.

There was the miracle in Numbers 17 of God showing His approval upon Aaron as the high priest and his family. There was the water that came out of the rock when it was smitten by Moses. And of course, the great miracle, that the nation always looked back to acknowledge as the sign that God was with them and that they were God's people, was the miracle of the parting of the Red Sea so that the children of Israel were able to pass through on dry land; the Egyptians, attempting to do so themselves, were drowned.

Now there are those who would try to explain, by natural phenomena, the parting of the Red Sea from Exodus 14. And they say actually it is not the Red Sea; it is the Sea of Reeds, which is quite shallow. And that oftentimes in the Sea of Reeds when the wind is blowing for a period of time it sorts of blows the water back and it is only ankle deep. And in reality it is very shallow and thus, with this wind they were able to pass over in ankle-deep water. That does not explain how the Scripture said that the sea stood up on both sides. Also, it does not really remove the miraculous because if it was only ankle-deep water, it was quite a miracle that God could drown the whole Egyptian army in ankle-deep water!

The prophet Elijah seemed to possess this gift of working of miracles. You remember he prayed and it did not rain for the space of three years. This brought the great drought into the country. He prayed again and it rained. During this period of drought, he came to a widow and asked her give him something

to eat. And she said that she and her son had only enough oil and enough meal to make some bread for themselves. They were going to eat it and then just die-starve to death. In 1 Kings 17, Elijah said, "Make some for me first." And she did and during the entire period of drought the meal in the barrel and the oil was never empty. It miraculously lasted through the whole period of the drought.

Through the prayers of Elijah, a child was restored back to life. And of course, we remember the story of the challenge of the prophets of Baal there on Mount Carmel in 1 Kings 18, where they were to build their altars but they were not to kindle a fire on the altar. And the prophets of Baal were to pray to their god to kindle their fire and consume their sacrifice. And having prayed futilely all day long, with a little chiding and prodding, Elijah said, "Maybe your god's asleep. Maybe he is on vacation. Maybe you should cry a little longer." And Elijah was really watching them whip themselves into a frenzy. And when still there was no response, then just to rub it in he commanded that they dig a trench around his altar. Elijah commanded them to pour water all over the sacrifice and pour more water on it until the sacrifice was soaked and the water filled the trench. And then he prayed and God answered by fire, consuming the sacrifice and the altar itself, licking up the water round about. And the people were falling on their faces acknowledging that Jehovah was God. This was quite a miracle.

There was the miracle of the captains that were sent by the king with their fifty men to bring him into custody. And how they came out and said, "Oh thou man of God, the king has commanded that we bring you into custody." Elijah said, "If I am a man of God let fire come down from heaven and consume

you and your fifty men." And fire came down and consumed them. And so, this happened to three of the captains. The fourth had a little better sense. He came out and said, "Look I am a family man. Have mercy on me! I am only doing my duty. And would you mind, please, to come with me." These are the miracles that accompanied Elijah.

And of course, just before his death as he was being pursued and followed by Elisha, who had asked him for a double portion of the Spirit, Elijah said, "You have asked a difficult thing but if you are with me at the time of my departure you will receive it." When Elijah came to the Jordan River going over into the area of Moab in 2 Kings 2, he took his mantle and smote the river and it parted and he walked through with Elisha following him. And then Elijah was translated into heaven and the mantle fell upon Elisha. It is interesting he asked for a double portion and there are twice as many miracles recorded in the life of Elisha as there was Elijah. It seemed that he did get the double portion. As he came back to the Jordan River he took the mantle and said, "Where is the God of Elijah?" and the river parted and he came across.

There was the multiplying of the oil in 1 Kings 17 with the woman who was poor. And the prophet said, "Well, how much do you have here?" And she said, "Just a little oil." And he said, "Well go around to all your neighbors and borrow all of the pots that you can get. And then take from your little oil and fill up all the pots." And she took the little oil she had and she filled all the pots and sold it and was able to survive on it.

Other miracles occurred when the spring in Jericho was healed in 2 Kings 2. The water was actually bitter and the people

complained to Elisha and he asked for some salt. He threw it in and the water was healed. A child was raised to life. Naaman was cleansed of his leprosy. And of course, the prophets were building a house down by the Jordan River and as one of the fellows was cutting down a tree with an ax, in 2 Kings 6, the ax head fell off into the Jordan River. And he came and he said to Elisha, "Alas, I borrowed it, you know." And he said, "Where did it go in?" And he threw in a stick and the ax head made of iron did swim. And so, these are marvelous miracles accompanying the life of Elisha.

Then as you move on in the Old Testament, through Isaiah there was that marvelous miracle of the healing of Hezekiah in Isaiah 38 when the sundial went backwards as a testimony that God was going to heal Hezekiah.

But then of course moving to the New Testament and the life of Jesus we have so many miracles. They began at the feast of Cana in Galilee when Jesus turned the water into wine. He healed the nobleman's son from a distance. He raised the dead son of the widow of Nain. He raised the dead daughter of Jairus. And then finally, He raised Lazarus, who had been buried for four days, from the dead. He fed multitudes with the five loaves and the two fish. And then He walked on the water. These are marvelous miracles.

Now this gift of the working of miracles, it would seem, is one of the requirements for apostleship. When Paul was writing to the Corinthians defending the title of apostle, he said to them in 2 Corinthians 12:12, "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds." So, Paul is pointing to the miracles that were

done through his ministry while he was there in Corinth. And he used those as a badge to attest to the fact that he was an apostle. And thus, it seems that it was one of the requirements of apostleship in the early church to have this gift of working of miracles.

But the gift of the working of miracles did not seem, in the early church, to be limited to the apostles. When Paul the Apostle was on the way to Damascus to imprison those who were calling upon the name of Jesus, he had his encounter with the Lord. The Lord spoke to him and called him into the ministry-into following Jesus Christ. And as a result of this encounter with Jesus, he was blinded and had to be led into Damascus.

Now there was a certain disciple of Jesus in Damascus whose name was Ananias. He was not an apostle but just a disciple. In Acts 9, the Lord spoke to him and told him to go to the street called Straight, to inquire at the house of Simon for this fellow Saul. "Because," the Lord said, "he is praying." And Ananias said, "Lord, I have heard about this fellow, how he has really wreaked havoc in the church in Jerusalem. And actually, he has been sent here to Damascus to imprison those who call on Your name." In other words, "Are You sure, Lord?" And the Lord said, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me. I have shown him the things he is going to suffer for My name."

So, Ananias came to Paul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord has sent me unto you that you might receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And so, he laid hands on Paul and Paul received his sight and was filled with the Holy Spirit. And so here is a disciple exercising the gift of miracles.

Philip, one of those who was chosen to wait on the tables, went to Samaria to preach Christ and many believed and were baptized when they saw the miracles that he did. And then also Stephen was one of the other of the seven men who were chosen to wait tables in the early church. We are told concerning Stephen in Acts 6:8, that he was full of faith and power. And as we said, the gift of faith seems to be related to the gift of working of miracles. I think you have sort of a "triunity" of gifts: faith, the gifts of healing, and the working of miracles. I think they are all three tied together. Stephen was full of faith and power and he did great wonders and miracles among the people. So, although it was necessary to have this gift if you were to take the title of apostle, there were others who had the gift who obviously were not considered apostles in the early church.

Now I believe that there are incumbent dangers to one who would possess the gift of working of miracles. And I think the first danger would be the using of the gift for your own personal benefit. And this is pretty much what Satan suggested to Jesus in the temptation. In Luke 4, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness and there He fasted for forty days. And afterwards He was hungry. Satan came unto Him and he said, "Since You are the Son of God..." The King James says, "If you are the son of God," but the case is not in the indicative but rather in the subjunctive case, and so it properly translates as "Since You are the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread." In other words, use Your miraculous powers to satisfy Your own physical needs. Use Your powers in order to just satisfy the flesh. And you remember Jesus refused to do so. He said, "It is

written, man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Father" (Matthew 4:4).

We note in the Old Testament when Naaman the leper was cleansed and realized that he was cleansed and saw the miracle, he returned to the prophet Elisha and sought to give him rewards and gifts because of the miracle of his healing. But we note that Elisha refused to accept any remuneration or any of the rewards or benefits from Naaman for the miracle that he experienced.

I think there is a danger in having the gift of the working of miracles. The danger is in taking personal glory unto yourself for what God has done. Because if a person sees a miracle and you seem to be the instrument through which that miracle was accomplished, people are very ready to put you on some kind of pedestal. They look up to you in awe as some kind of mighty man of God. And there is a danger in accepting that adulation and that wonderment and awe of the people.

It is a very embarrassing thing when God uses you as His instrument and people seek to extol or exalt you. I really have been blessed of God. Yes, to a great extent I admit that. But I have actually had people come up and sort of touch me and say, "Can I touch you?" And I say, "Pet my dog. He appreciates it."

When Peter was going into the temple there was a man who was born lame who was seeking alms. And Peter said, "I do not have silver and gold, but what I have I will give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise to your feet and walk" (Acts 3:6). And he took him by the right hand and lifted him to his feet. Immediately he received strength and he began to walk. He began to run-running through the temple. And the people said,

"Look, is that the lame man who has been out there all these years? It sure looked like him. How is it that he is walking?"
"We do not know. Let us find out."

And they followed him out to Solomon's Porch where Peter was still standing. And he grabbed hold of Peter and began to hug him-probably even kiss him. So as all the people gathered because of the lame man's response towards Peter, they related the miracle of this man walking to him. And Peter looks up and all of a sudden, all these people are looking at him, saying, "Wow! What is this?"

And Peter said, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel you at this?" This was sort of a rebuke. "You see, you are the men of Israel. You are the men who worship the God of Israel, who is a God of miracles. So why should you marvel, that God should work a miracle? I mean after all; He is the God who created the universe. Why should you marvel at this? Why should you look on us as though we, through our own righteousness, have done this good deed to this lame man? Why are you looking at me like I am so holy or righteous?" And he pointed them immediately to Jesus Christ. "This was done through the name of Jesus Christ, whom your rulers crucified. And it is through the faith of Him that this man stands here before you whole." So the people were ready to exalt Peter for the miracle. Peter had enough wisdom not to take the glory from the people. Modern day evangelists would have passed the offering plate.

In Acts 14 when Paul was in Lystra, there was a lame man about forty years old who had never been able to walk. And as Paul was preaching-and we will get to this gift of discernment-Paul discerned that the man had enough faith to be healed. And he

said, "Brother, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole. Stand up and walk!" And the man stood up and walked. And all of the people there in Lystra said, "The gods have come down!" And they ran up the street to the temple of Jupiter. And they got hold of the priest and they said, "Man, what are you doing here? Jupiter is down the street! He brought Mercury with him." And so the priest came dragging an ox down the street. He was going to sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas right there.

Now the whole human rationale would say, "Alright! We have them in the palm of our hand. We will let them think that we are gods and we will sort of manipulate them. We will ultimately get them around to the Lord. But in the meantime, we can live a pretty good life."

There is a danger any time God uses you as His instrument to do His work of love and grace in another person's heart and life. People want to respond to the instrument, many times, rather than to God. They are so grateful for what God has done; they want to reward the instrument that God used. And thus, unless a person had really come to the place in their own life where they do not have personal ambition or personal desires for glory, one of the worst things in the world would be for God to give to them the gift of working of miracles. It could absolutely destroy them. It is not an easy gift to have.

Now does God work miracles today or did all of the miracles cease with the last of the apostles? That seems to be an argument that has occupied the theologians for many years. But it is my firm conviction in answer to the question, "Does God work miracles today?"-the answer is an unqualified, yes! Salvation is a miracle.

In Mark 10 when the rich young ruler came to Jesus seeking the way of salvation and when he finally went away sorrowful, Jesus then turned to His disciples and He said, "How hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of heaven. Really it is easier for a camel to go through an eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." Peter, in astonishment said, "Lord, who then can be saved?" And the answer of Jesus was, "With man it is impossible."

So, if a miracle is something that is humanly impossible, then salvation is a miracle because it is humanly impossible for any man to save himself. So, to say that the days of miracles are over would be to deny that people could be saved today. No, the days of miracles, thank God, are not over. God is still working miracles today.

THE GIFT OF INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

When the supernatural gift of speaking tongues was used in a worship service, according to Scripture the uttered message is to be interpreted. Paul made this clear when he wrote to the Corinthians. He said.

But if there is no one to interpret, let them be silent in church and speak to themselves and to God (1 Corinthians 14:28)

Those who have the gift of interpretation of tongues accomplish this need. The Bible says the interpretation of tongues is a spiritual gift. Paul wrote.

He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and to another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to know whether it is really the Spirit of God or another

spirit that is speaking. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, and another is given the ability to interpret what is being said (1 Corinthians 12:10).

There is a gift of interpretation of tongues.

This Is a Supernatural Gift

A number of things must be said about the gift of interpretation of tongues. First, the interpretation of tongues is not the ability to understand a language that one has already learned. It is rather a supernatural ability to understand someone speaking in a language in which they have never learned. In other words, it is a gift from God.

There Is Uncertainty about What Is Interpreted

There is uncertainty as to the nature of the tongue language that was interpreted at Corinth. There are a number of possibilities.

If the tongues in Corinth were genuine foreign languages, then anyone who knew the language, believer or unbeliever, would be able to interpret it. There would be no miracle involved in those cases.

If the tongue was a genuine foreign language that was unknown to either the speaker or interpreter, then there was a double miracle – one in the speaking and another in the interpreting.

However, if the tongue speaking were merely a series of strange syllables that were broken up and disjointed, then the gift of interpretation would consist of taking these meaningless utterances and making sense out of them.

These are the three possibilities.

The Tongues Should Always Be Interpreted in a Church Context

Whatever the nature of the tongue language, the interpreter turns the attention of the congregation from the one speaking toward God. The Apostle Paul insisted that every time the gift of tongues was exercised publicly, it should be interpreted. He wrote.

If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret (1 Corinthians 14:27).

While the tongue languages which were spoken may never have been translated outside of a church meeting, it was commanded that they were to be translated during a church meeting.

From what Paul says about the gift of interpretation of tongues, we can deduce the following.

There Were Known Interpreters in the Church

It seems that from what Paul wrote we can conclude that there were people in the congregation at Corinth who were known to have the gift of interpretation. This appears to be the meaning of Paul's statement about keeping silent unless there was an interpreter present. Indeed, for this statement to make any sense, the people in the church must have known who had the gift of interpretation. This would permit those who had the gift of tongues only to speak when the one with the gift of interpretation was present. Otherwise, they would have to remain silent.

The Tongue Speaker May Have Had the Gift of Interpretation

It is possible that those who had the gift of tongues may also have had the gift of interpretation. Paul wrote to the Corinthians about the possibility of the speaker interpreting his own words. He put it this way.

Now I would like all of you to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. One who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up (1 Corinthians 14:5).

Therefore, the one who utters the tongue may also be the one to interpret it.

One Interpreter Could Interpret Any Tongue Language Spoken

We can also deduce from this passage that the interpreter was able to interpret any language that was spoken. The interpreter had the supernatural gift to explain any tongue language that was spoken during the service.

Only One Person Was to Give the Interpretation

No matter how many different people spoke in tongues during a meeting, which Paul limited to three, only one person was to give the interpretation. There was not to be multiple interpreters.

There May Have Been Different Interpretations of the Same Tongue in Corinth

The fact that Paul called for only one interpreter during a meeting may mean that multiple interpreters gave multiple interpretations and that their interpretations did not always

agree. This could have been why Paul made the following remark.

For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the congregations of the saints (1 Corinthians 14:33-34).

This could have been why he said the following at the end of his discourse on spiritual gifts.

But be sure that everything is done properly and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40).

If the tongue speaking was receiving different interpretations, then it can easily be seen how different doctrine could come into the church.

Paul made it clear that only God understood those who spoke in tongues. He wrote.

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

The fact that only God understood what was being said further shows the need for some interpretation of the tongue.

Since no one understood the tongue speaker, and that various interpretations may have been given, could explain the divisions that arose in the church at Corinth; the people were getting mixed messages.

Hence there was the need for one interpreter who clearly had the gift of interpretation. This way the church could be built up.

What Is the Gift of Interpretation of Tongues?

The Bible speaks of a spiritual gift of speaking in tongues as well as the spiritual gift of the interpretation of the language spoken.

We can define the gift of interpretation of tongues is a supernatural ability to understand the tongue language and translate it. It is not the ability to translate a foreign language. The nature of the tongue-language is debated. It was either definite foreign languages or some type of ecstatic utterance that no human could understand.

We know that those with the gift of interpretation of tongues were commanded to turn the congregation toward God – not to the speaker.

There are a number of things that can be deduced about the gift of interpretation of tongues. They include the following.

First, there seem to be known interpreters in the congregation at Corinth. These interpreters were able to explain any tongue that was spoken. Unless one of these interpreters was present the people were to keep silent as far as exercising the gift of tongues.

Also, only one interpreter was supposed to practice his or her gift during the church meeting. Thus, there were a limited number of speakers as well as a limited number of interpreters.

This may mean that there were multiple interpretations of the same episode of speaking in tongues happening at Corinth. These different interpretations of the same tongue could have added to the confusion in the church. Consequently, Paul wrote this particular section of First Corinthians to solve the problems

which had come about from this confusion. However, of this we cannot be certain.

The gift of love. (1 Corinthians 13)

13 If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. 11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. 12 For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Paul's teachings on the gifts of the holy spirits

The gift of tongues is meaningless without love

The gift of prophecy or knowledge in preaching too is useless without love

Having a gift of faith so strong as to move a mountain or giving oneself as a martyr is useless without love

Give Paul's teaching on the importance of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

And gifts come from the same spirit and the same God.

All gifts are used for the benefit to community

Their respective values are to be judged

Love is the greatest of all gifts,

To help Christians discern good from evil and live righteous lives.

They are used to glorify God.

They are used for instructing and encouraging the church.

Paul's teaching about love

Love is patience

Love is kindness

Love is not jealous or boastful

Love is not disrespectful in dealing

Love is not arrogant

Love is not irritable or resentful but rejoices in truth, bears all things, hopes all things and endures all things

Paul's teachings on comparison between prophecy and tongues

Those who speak in tongues cannot be understood by the audience who cannot interpret the message.

Those who speak in tongues communicate with God and so benefit themselves.

When tongues are not interpreted, they cause confusion to the hearers.

A prophet message may touch a sinner who may repent and turn to God

Prophecy contributes to the common good of the church

Criteria for discerning the gifts of the Holy Spirit

The New Testament gives the guidelines on how one may distinguish both the Holy Spirit and evil one and between a true prophet and false one.

Those with an evil spirit will curse Jesus.

A person under the influence of the Holy Spirit will proclaim Jesus as the lord.

A true prophet invites sinners to repent

A false prophet will ask for payment for his prophecies

A false prophet prophesies peace to please people

A true prophet speaks the truth including God's judgement to sinners irrespective of the consequences

The fruits of Holy Spirit

Those who live by the spirit through faith in Christ produce the fruitfulness of the Holy Spirit which is: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Generosity, Faithfulness

CHAPTER NINE

HOLY SPIRIT IN PRAYER

Prayer is our greatest Christian privilege. It is not optional for anyone who wants to develop a personal relationship with God. God had designed prayer to be the primary method of receiving His help and advancing His kingdom. But we fail more in our prayer life than any other place. God knows this, so He has given us Someone to help us in our prayer life—and that Someone is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of prayer and He is the One who leads us in prayer. It is He who will make a true life of prayer possible for us. The Bible teaches that there are two conditions possible for the Christian. One is to walk according to the Spirit, the other a walk according to the flesh. What is meant by the flesh is the carnal nature of man. Romans 8:7 says, "... the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law – indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God." When we are walking according to the flesh, (which is the Adamic nature in all of us) we don't want to pray and we cannot persevere in our prayer life. We cannot also rejoice in fellowship with God. When the Holy Spirit is in us and we are yielded to the Spirit, it is as normal as breathing to pray.

"True prayer "is God the Holy Spirit talking to God the Father in the name of God the Son, and the believer's heart is the prayer-room." So, the Spirit of God plays an important role in the prayer life of the disciple of Christ. God never intended that we should be left to pray on our own. So, He gave the Holy Spirit to instruct, inspire, and illumine our hearts and minds. Unaided by Him, we would be likely to pray for things

not only contrary to God's will but injurious to ourselves. In John 4:24, we see Jesus' words of encouragement to His followers, "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth" John 4:24. So we are to worship God in Spirit. Praying in the Spirit is Biblical and we should practise it on all occasions. Ephesians 6:18 says, "Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints." Jude 20 also says, "But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit."

But first we need to understand what the Bible means by "praying in the Spirit." Praying in the Spirit is a wonderful experience that comes from having a relationship with God's Holy Spirit. Speaking in other languages by the power of the Holy Spirit is the supernatural sign that God has chosen to show that the Holy Spirit has filled a person. At Pentecost the disciples began to pray in other tongues as the Spirit (of God) gave them utterance. It is clear that praying in the Spirit here, definitely means praying in tongues. The apostle Paul explains it this way: "For those who speak in a tongue do not speak to other people but to God; for nobody understands them, since they are speaking mysteries in the Spirit". 1 Corinthians 14:2. Paul also made a clear distinction between praying in the mind (intelligence) and praying in the Spirit: "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unproductive. What should I do then? I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray with the mind also; I will sing praise with the spirit, but I will sing praise with the mind also." 1 Corinthians 14:14-15 In other words praying with the mind means we pray not only to God, but also for other people around us to understand us, while

praying in tongues is directed directly to God only. But praying in the Spirit does not only mean to pray in tongues. Paul asks in 1 Corinthians 12:29-30, “Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?” No. Not every Christian speaks in tongues. It is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. When we pray in the Spirit, God’s Holy Spirit intercedes for us. He guides us in our prayers and He helps us in our weakness. It can be done through speaking in tongues or it can be done through speaking our own language but God’s Spirit takes charge. He knows our burdens and our needs and He knows God’s will and what is best for us.

How Does the Holy Spirit Help Us in Prayer?

1. When we are praying in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit is praying together with us and it is He who activates our will in prayer. He introduces us into the presence of the Father and gives us the faith to believe that God will answer our prayers. “...for through Him we...have our access in one Spirit to the Father” Ephesians 2:18. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit in us recognizes God as our Father, and it is the natural thing for the Spirit-filled person to say, “Abba Father”—to worship Him and praise Him. “... God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”” Galatians 4:6. He gives us confidence in the presence of God.

2. Sometimes in life, we are so overwhelmed that we don’t even know what we should pray for. At such times “...the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought...” Romans 8:26. He takes our prayers and adapts our prayers according to the will of God for He alone knows and can

interpret God's will and purpose. "The thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God" 1 Corinthians 2:11. He takes our faltering and imperfect prayers and puts them in a form acceptable to Our heavenly Father.

3. Paul gives further light on His activity in prayer. "The Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" Romans 8:26. Sometimes the Holy Spirit takes over when we have no words to express our prayers. In our darkest hours, the Holy Spirit of God merges with our spirit in wordless prayer. Hannah was praying in the Spirit in 1 Samuel. Her lips moved, but no sound was heard, and the man of God, Eli, mistakenly thought she was drunk. Hannah was in such distress that she didn't know what she should pray for. The Spirit prayed through her because she was unable to find the words. Her heart's desire was for a child, and God's will was to give her one. Hannah asked specifically for a boy and she received one. The Spirit of God thus aligns our hearts with God's and He also prays for those things we're longing for.

4. The Holy Spirit also lays special burdens of prayer on the believer who walks in fellowship with Him. Sometimes He prays through us in our own language or in the one that He chooses beyond our natural way of praying. The prayer pours out of the depths of our soul with great urgency and He intends to answer the prayer through our intercessions. He will also give us the strength to prevail in prayer till the answer comes. Such a burden was laid on the prophets. Often they could get relief only through prolonged and earnest prayer. Daniel 10:2-3 refers to one such experience: "In those days I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks. I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at

all, until the entire three weeks were completed.” But the answer to his prayer came at God’s own time. So, in order to pray prevailingly, we must be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is thus the Source and Sustainer of our spiritual life. That’s why Jesus promised a Counselor to His followers, One who would always be with them and in them. John 14:16-18 says, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever- the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.” Thus, all true prayer should be done by means of the Holy Spirit and in dependence on the Spirit’s help. It should be done surrounded by His presence and power, motivated and empowered by Him. As J. Stuart Holden wrote the only secret of a real prayer life is to “Be filled with the Spirit”.

CHAPTER TEN

HOLY SPIRIT AND WORSHIP

Ultimately, current expectations concerning the Holy Spirit's work in worship must derive, not from experience, but from Scripture. Taking all of the biblical data concerning the Holy Spirit's work throughout biblical history into account, there is no doubt that he sometimes works in extraordinary ways. Yet extraordinary works of the Spirit are not the ordinary way God works his sovereign will through the course of biblical history.

Considering all of the normal ways the Holy Spirit works to bring order through biblical history provides a robust picture of what should be the expectation for how the Holy Spirit works in worship. First, his purpose in all he does is to bring order, to both individual Christians and to the Body as a whole. The descriptions in Scripture of the Holy Spirit's activity overwhelmingly attest to this purpose, and this purpose would most naturally extend to his work in corporate worship. He worked to bring peace and blessing to Israel as he dwelt among them in the Old Testament Temple, and he does the same as he dwells within the New Testament Temple. This was his purpose in the foundational gifts he gave to the apostles and others during the formation of the church, and even if those gifts continue today, their purpose remains the same.

One of the most influential and long-lasting works of the Holy Spirit to bring order to his people was the inspiration of his Word; this is why the most frequently described act of the Holy Spirit in Scripture is the giving of revelation, and why, for example, his work of "filling" a believer (Eph 5:19) is paralleled

in Paul's writings with the Word of Christ "richly dwelling" within a Christian (Col 3:16). Thus, believers should expect that the Holy Spirit will work today primary through his Word, and he will never act contrary to his Word.

The sufficiency of the Spirit-inspired Word of God leads to the conviction that he has given the church in that Word all the revelation necessary concerning the elements he desires to be part of worship: reading the Word (1 Tim 4:13), preaching the Word (2 Tim 4:2), singing the Word (Col 3:16, Eph 5:19), prayer (1 Tim 2:1), giving (1 Cor 16:2), baptism (Matt 28:19), and the Lord's holy communion (1 Cor 11:23–32). Furthermore, because the Holy Spirit inspired the sufficient revelation concerning the elements for worship, believers should expect that he would naturally work through those elements in the context of worship. This leads to a fourth observation, namely, that believers should expect the Holy Spirit's ordinary work in worship to be that of sanctifying them through the effectual means of grace that he has prescribed in his Word. The regular, disciplined use of these means of grace progressively forms believers into the image of Jesus Christ; these Spirit-ordained elements are the means through which Christians "work out [their] own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in [them], both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil 2:12–13).

Finally, with this being the expectation of how the Holy Spirit will work in worship, what role does emotion and music play in worship, and how are they related to the Holy Spirit? This question is particularly relevant since emotion and music are central to the contemporary expectation of how the Holy Spirit works. Very simply, understanding the ordinary way the Holy

Spirit works in worship leads to the conclusion that emotion and singing come as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life, not as a cause of the Holy Spirit's work.

Therefore, while the Holy Spirit of God, who with the Father and the Son should be worshiped and glorified, may certainly do whatever he pleases in the world broadly and in corporate worship specifically, he is not a God of disorder, but a God of peace. The testimony of Scripture concerning the ordinary ways he works and a careful study of the New Testament's explicit treatment of his ordinary work in worship should lead Christians to expect, not extraordinary experience when the Holy Spirit works, but disciplined formation. Truly Spirit-led worship is that in which the forms, elements, and content are shaped, guided, and filled with the Spirit-inspired Word for the purpose of the disciplined spiritual formation of his people.