

The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts

By Lonny R. Bower, 23 September, 2009

Proverbs 16:25

Introduction:

One of the most misunderstood doctrines within Christianity today is the doctrine of Spiritual gifts. Any church that does not allow the demonstration and exercise of Spiritual gifts is either dying or already dead! I want to focus your attention on our opening verse and through it examine our way of worship. Is it our way, or is it the way of the Spirit? Our way leads to death, period! However, the way of the Spirit is life and life more abundantly! I don't know where you are at, but I don't want to just exist, I don't want to barely hang on, I want to be more than a conqueror, I want to live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit! I want the Spirit to have free reign in my life and ministry. When it comes to Spiritual gifts we all have a responsibility. It is up to us to not only seek them, but to receive them, not solely for our benefit, but so that the body of Christ can profit. It has been my observation that God's people simply don't seek for the gifts of the Spirit or expect to receive them because many feel that if God wants them to have the Spiritual gifts that He will give them to them. This simply is not true and we know it's not because the Lord does not move this way. If He did all would be saved because He desires that all come to repentance, but He does not force His gift of salvation on anyone. Instead He patiently waits for them to recognize their need and then ask Him for salvation. It's past time for the church to recognize her need for the Spiritual (manifestation) gifts and then ask the Lord for them. However, the devil does want the church to have them and he'll use every deception in his power to keep her from receiving and walking in them. Because he knows a church that walks in and displays the manifestation gifts of the Spirit is a growing, living church. The news of the activity of the Spirit will spread like wildfire and people will come in to see for themselves what's going on, but as a result, many will receive the word of God and accept His gift of salvation. It is at this point that we will begin to experience revival among God's people and an awakening among the lost. Man's way is the way of death, but the Lord's way is the way of life and we may ourselves choose to reject the Holy Spirit and His gifts and still make it to heaven on our profession of Christ, but how many will we leave behind because we refuse to reach out and lay hold of what God has for us? Spiritual gifts are God's way and he does nothing in vain.

I. Knowledge is Power – 1 Corinthians 1:7, 12:1-3

He has made Spiritual gifts available to us for a purpose and if we ignore them or write them off as some have done by saying they are not for today, we might as well write all His gifts off to include salvation! This may sound absurd, but it's true, if we're willing to receive the gift of salvation, what would keep us from wanting everything else God has for us? We must choose His way and His way says we need to be saved, changed into a new creation that does not walk after the old life or after the ways of the world. His

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way is for the saved to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit baptized to be utilized in the gifts of the Spirit so that all may profit! Church it's time to heed the words of the Lord and not be ignorant about spiritual gifts. Imagine a church that experienced the manifestation of the Spiritual gifts every time they met together. Perhaps then, there would be an expectation among the people that could not be denied or quenched. If I were to tell you that it wasn't God's will for the sinner to be saved every time the word was preached, hopefully you would say that such a statement was absurd. Likewise, it would be absurd to think that it is not God's will for the manifestation gifts to be present whenever we meet together. The truth is, it is His will, but we often go our own way and are willing ignorant concerning Spiritual gifts.

Think About it:

Are you baptized in the Holy Ghost?

Do you want to experience the fullness of the Spirit's power?

II. Intended for the Profit of All – 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

These gifts are not just for the pastor or a select few, they're for all who have been saved and baptized in the Holy Spirit. It is doctrinally important to note that if one rejects the Holy Spirit, then one can hardly receive any of the Spiritual gifts, since they are from Him. One must embrace the promise of the Father, be baptized in the Holy Spirit and then recognize the need for the gifts of the Spirit in their own life. The enemy has convinced many that there is no place, time or purpose for the Spiritual gifts today. God has not changed His mind, Spiritual gifts are His way, His way is right and His way is life. Which way are we going, our way that seems right, or God's way?

Think about it:

What is your view on Spiritual gifts – have you considered them as “off limits”?

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III. Diversity of Gifts – 1 Corinthians 12:4, 8-11

Word of wisdom; is the Holy Spirit led application of the word of God to a specific circumstance or problem in someone's life. It can be given corporately or individually as the Spirit leads but usually is used one on one as we minister to each other. **Word of knowledge;** is a word given by the Holy Spirit that reveals knowledge of ones circumstances or situation and applies biblical truth to such areas. It can be given corporately or individually as the Spirit leads. **Faith;** is the extra measure given by the Holy Spirit to move mountains often connected with miracles and healing. It can be used corporately or individually as the Spirit leads. **Gifts of healings;** are those differing gifts used for restoration of health, used in many different ways and in many different places. Wherever there is faith there are healings, find a man or woman of great faith and you'll see healings. These gifts can also be used corporately or individually as the Spirit leads. **Miraculous powers;** are acts of supernatural power such as the healing from incurable diseases, sight being restored to the blind, sound restored to the deaf and so on. Can also be used corporately or individually as the Spirit leads. **Prophecy;** (separate from the ministry gift of prophecy) is the speaking forth of a spontaneous unrehearsed word for encouraging, rebuking, and strengthening, warning of things to come or comforting as the Holy Spirit enables. It can be given corporately or individually as the Spirit leads. **Discernment of spirits;** is the power given by the Holy Spirit to determine whether the word of knowledge, wisdom or prophecy is of the Lord. It is also to determine the validity of those who claim to be Christians but are not, the ability to recognize false teachers. May also be used individually or corporately. **Different kinds of tongues;** not necessarily the same tongue received upon the baptism of the Holy Spirit, given as a gift to whoever is humble enough to use it. Used in the body at the prompting of the Holy Spirit and meant to be interpreted. May contain prophecy, knowledge, warning, or teaching for the body or specific individuals. **Interpretation of tongues;** is the Holy Spirit enabled ability to understand what is spoken in tongues followed with the boldness and unction by the Holy Spirit to speak it forth. This is not the ability to interpret ones prayers as they are praying in the Spirit, but to interpret the message of tongues spoken to the body.

Think about it:

Have you ever witnessed any of the gifts being manifested? Have you been used in any of them? Which ones?

