



Power in the Spirit

Every Christian believer receives the Holy Spirit as an indwelling presence. This empowers us to live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit and bear the fruit of the Spirit—all as gifts of unasked for grace poured into those who invite Jesus to be their Savior. Astoundingly, there is more. Jesus Himself in the scriptures calls us to receive a supernatural empowerment for service under His leadership. Unlike the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, which is given automatically at conversion, this empowerment comes upon us as we intentionally seek this further blessing of grace. With it come further gifts upon gift...

The following five chapters are taken from our book, *Knowing the Spirit: Our Mystery Guest*. The full version (16 chapters) is [available at Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000APR004) in paperback or as an ebook.

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CHAPTER 4

HOLY SPIRIT, JESUS AND YOU

The family resemblance is uncanny. Jesus' earthly relationship with the Holy Spirit is exactly mirrored by our own, practically in every detail. The few remaining parts of the image require our trusting obedience to fill in. Will we allow God to finish the portrait He desires to paint upon the canvass of our life?

"A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master." Matthew 10:24-25

Jesus our Example

The unnamed writer of Hebrews tells us that in order to save us from sin-bondage, death and temptation, Jesus had to be made like us "in every respect."¹ The Eternal Son of God became fully human in order to be both our representative at the cross and our example for how to live the new life He would give us. This radical descent of God into His creation never fails to astonish, whenever we pause to consider what it must have meant for Jesus to become like us. But there is a flip side to the Redemption which Jesus' descent accomplished: what it means *for us*. Through faith-conversion we have now been raised up into becoming like Him.

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
Colossians 3:1-3

At the very least the above passage should clue us in that many things about us are radically changed from what we might have imagined ourselves to be like—based on our past (earth-bound) experience and understanding of ourselves. Now that Jesus is in us and we are in Him all bets are off. We can only truly know ourselves and our world from Christ's perspective. Since that perspective is heavenly it is guaranteed to be a) filled with delight and b) incredibly strange.

Get ready to re-adjust your thinking about yourself by seeing what scripture has to say about you, now that you have received Jesus as your indwelling Savior and Redeemer. Some of the following seven likenesses have already been accomplished at your conversion. Some will require your willing participation to enter more fully into the mystery and power of new life. Whatever you decide to do, don't hold back.² No one loves you better or has greater joy planned for you than Jesus. See what He has done for you and let that be both a recommendation and an invitation to follow Him further into the dynamic union that He desires.

"I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me." John 17:23



Our Likeness to Jesus in the Holy Spirit

1) Born of the Holy Spirit

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

Luke 1:34-36

Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit. The miracle of His birth sets the pattern for our re-birth: Jesus of Nazareth is truly the flesh and blood child of Mary; He is also from conception the Eternal Son of our heavenly Father. It was the Holy Spirit who accomplished this. Now it is our turn, if we are willing to turn back to God. Just as Jesus was born from above by the sinless Spirit of God, so, too, we creatures of flesh and blood are born from above by the same Holy Spirit.

Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'"

John 3:5-7

2) Filled with the Holy Spirit

For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. John 3:34-35

Just as Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit without measure, so, too, are we. It is immensely comforting to know (by faith) that God gives His Spirit to us "without measure." Otherwise it could easily seem that we only got a very tiny portion, since what we usually sense of the Lord's presence with us may seem fairly slight. There is a huge difference, however, between the Holy Spirit's actual presence and His manifest presence. Holy Spirit is always in us in fullness, though we may not sense any manifestation of His Presence. Part of our high calling is to press in to this unchanging reality through faith so that (experientially) we can be filled with the fullness that lies within.

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:17-19

3) Baptized with the Holy Spirit

And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him. Matthew 3:16

Immediately after being baptized with water, Jesus was baptized with the Holy Spirit. Jesus didn't need faith-conversion or water baptism to be cleansed of sin as we do, but He submitted to it as an act of obedience.³ Our faith-conversion and water baptism catch us up with Him for the new birth and the indwelling Spirit provide us with a sinless nature united with God just as Jesus enjoyed from birth. The one piece that still needs to fall into place is the baptism in the Spirit. Jesus received it immediately; most of us don't. According to Jesus' own words, we are to pray and seek this further experience of empowerment.

And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Acts 1:4-5

4) Led by the Holy Spirit

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
Matthew 4:1

Immediately after being baptized, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness. There was nothing accidental about this: Jesus was following a clear leading of the Spirit. Since Jesus explained elsewhere that He always did what He saw the Father doing, being led by the Spirit was something Jesus had been practicing consciously all His life.⁴ Naturally, we have some catching up to do here. Sometimes the leading of the Holy Spirit will be without our conscious knowing; at other times it will seem to depend entirely upon our willing participation. Nevertheless, whether it is conscious or unconscious, we are now being led by the same Holy Spirit who led Jesus.

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. Romans 8:14

5) Sealed by the Holy Spirit

"Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal." John 6:27

The Father set His seal upon Jesus. In the ancient world the seal was an authoritative sign, representing ownership or origin. Documents were sealed as a declaration of the sender's identity and as a guarantee that what they conveyed was an authentic expression of his will. We, too, have received a seal set upon us by the Father as a guarantee that everything He has promised will come to pass for those who desire to enter into this New Covenant. Just as ancient seals also proclaimed ownership of goods, we have been sealed as a sign of our belonging to Jesus, body, soul and spirit.

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:13-14

6) Empowered by the Holy Spirit

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. Luke 4:14-15

Jesus lived and ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit. This was the secret of His effectiveness at teaching, healing and casting out demons.⁵ God wants the same empowerment for us. A great deal of that power comes through the indwelling Spirit who enables us to recognize truth, witness about Christ, grow in the fruit of the Spirit and stand firm against temptation. What further power could we need? Power for the supernatural works that Jesus did!⁶ This kind of empowerment comes through the baptism of the Spirit. Significantly, it is this empowerment which Jesus commanded His recently born again converts to seek.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8

7) Anointed by the Holy Spirit

You yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. Acts 10:37-39

Prophets, priests and kings were anointed with oil in the Old Testament as a sign that the Holy Spirit would be working through them in their calling. The anointing was thus a sign of the Spirit's presence and power upon an individual for accomplishing things which they could not do by natural ability alone. Jesus lived under this anointing in every area of His life, including His capacity for joy and for setting captives free.⁷ We get to follow Him in this! We are also anointed by the Holy Spirit to help us carry out our assignments. This anointing increases as we abide in Christ.

But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything—and is true and is no lie, just as it has taught you—abide in him. 1 John 2:27

Some Unfinished Business

Jesus sets the standard: He is our Model for ministry and Example for how to live. If He needed all of the above seven aspects of relationship with the Holy Spirit, why wouldn't we? Three of the seven have already been provided for us through faith-conversion: born by the Spirit, filled by the Spirit and sealed by the Spirit. Three have begun, but will need our intentional cultivation: being led by the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit and anointed by the Spirit. One will require deliberate seeking, if we are to

receive it at all: the baptism of the Spirit. Jesus abided in God, doing whatever He saw the Father doing. In the same way we need to abide in Christ, doing everything we see Him doing.

CHAPTER 10

GIFTED BY THE SPIRIT

Now that you're suited up for battle, it's time to head out as part of the Rescue. Here's where the Holy Spirit has truly gone before you, equipping you to play your part. These gifts should be of particular interest to everyone, since each of us has been given at least one gift for active service. Oddly enough, it's not always obvious to us what our unique gift is. Perhaps the Lord enjoys playing Hide and Seek more than we might imagine. Here's a clue: Usually you will find them hidden in plain sight, since people often live out of their gift before they catch on to what it is. Intrigued? See if you can spot your own.

Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Romans 12:6-8

Supernaturally Natural

These seven gifts are called motivational gifts because they provide the inner focus that inspires us to get into the game of serving humanity in our own particular way. We have an inner drive or motivation that makes us notice certain areas of need in the church or the world and then keeps us looking for ways of meeting that need. All of this happens to match our gift so naturally that we may never stop to question or examine it. We might wonder, "Why doesn't everyone feel this way?" and be genuinely surprised that they don't.

Having one these gifts doesn't mean that we are going to be great at it automatically. They have to be cultivated like anything else in life. And they won't work very well if we aren't in balance with the Lord (more on that later). Nevertheless, the sense of inner compelling is so consistent and so intimately tied into our own desires that it practically guarantees that we will develop real skills to go along with the gift. If we don't, it won't be for lack of effort, since the gift keeps pointing us at the same target over and over again. This inner motivation is nothing less than God at work within us "for his good pleasure."⁸

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Philippians 2:12-13

This means that there will be joy in it, because God is working in us to make us willing (desirous) of doing what He is also enabling us to do. It pleases the Lord to work through us and He is very good about passing His feelings on to us. This doesn't mean that we can't ever burn out the inner flame. We can. It feels so good operating out of our gift that exhausting ourselves is a danger that has to be guarded against. However, the Lord always stands ready to renew and refresh us. If we allow Him to do that—wonder of wonders—the former desires have a way of springing right back to life! This inner drive comes from His holy fire to burn brightly within us in this particular way and that flame can never be quenched.

For God's gifts and His call are irrevocable. [He never withdraws them when once they are given, and He does not change His mind about those to whom He gives His grace or to whom He sends His call.] Romans 11:29 AMP

Primary and Secondary

As you look over the list you may notice right away the gift that is your primary motivation. If you can't spot it, others who know you well probably can. The Holy Spirit has been cultivating these inner motivations in us since childhood in terms of general orientation.⁹ Conversion and the entrance of the Holy Spirit within us may bring new aspects and abilities out to the forefront, as well as unveil for us new applications within the Christian community. For instance, someone gifted as a teacher may have been growing happily in that area all their life, but conversion will likely bring whole new levels of purpose and initiate a brand new desire to teach spiritual truths.

Some confusion may arise over just how many gifts you have. Paul gives us little to go on beyond the mere recounting of the list. There is nothing here to limit these to one per person. You could conceivably have several primary gifts and rotate through times of being more focused on one rather than the other. Nevertheless, the common pattern is for a person to have a single primary gift with one or more secondary gifts that complement and enhance its operation. In this way the Lord provides a natural sense of cohesion and wholeness to our inner focus and motivation: We aren't as likely to be pulled in three directions at once! Even so, all of us can (and probably should) cultivate each of these gifts to some degree.

Flesh Verses Spirit

Since these gifts are the Holy Spirit working within us, we might suppose that our gift(s) will always work for good in our life and for the good of those we seek to serve. Not so! It is too much to be hoped that these inner workings of the Lord cannot be subverted by the enemy. Spiritual darkness loves to turn even good things against us. As mentioned earlier, if we don't stay in balance these gifts of His won't operate properly. The key to staying balanced is living with Jesus at the center and with ourselves surrendered and submitted to His leadership. He hasn't given us gifts and callings so that we can go charging off on our own.

As with anything in this new life in Christ, our actual trust in the Lord determines practically everything else. If you want to serve Him and others, if you want your gift(s) to be operating at peak performance, then you will want to learn to guard your heart so that the peace of Christ rules within you.¹⁰ There is no clearer indication that we are yielded to His leadership than the peace He gives us when we are trusting Him and doing things His way.¹¹ With that peace in place the motivational gifts positively hum.

It is truly amazing, even breathtaking to be flowing in these gifts. This is part of what it means to be led by the Spirit.¹²

We can, however, fall back into being oppressed by the flesh.¹³ It is easy and natural to fall out of the Spirit and into the flesh, even when we are trying to serve the Lord. Because the flesh is our fallen nature, falling into it almost feels normal. The absence of the peace of Christ should alert us that something has gone wrong. That wrongness will inevitably show up by distorting the gifts we cherish and enjoy, turning service into something onerous, rather than delightful. In the following brief descriptions notice how being in the flesh (disconnected from Christ) distorts the gift. Note also the wonderful purpose the gift can serve when we are in the Spirit.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

Seven Motivational Gifts

Because it is possible for believers to receive the indwelling Spirit, but never seek or receive the baptism in the Spirit, there will be differences in the way these gifts operate in those who are not Holy Spirit baptized. Remember, the Early Church that Paul shepherded was almost entirely composed of people who had received the baptism in the Spirit. Hence, he would have had in his mind the way these gifts look in the lives of people who know Jesus by faith and are also anointed with the Spirit's power. That's the perspective we seek to follow here. If you haven't yet received the baptism of power or know much about it, don't worry—it's coming up for discussion in the next chapter.

1) Prophecy: "If prophecy, in proportion to our faith." People with this gift usually know it and are eager to cultivate it, because it often brings enhanced opportunities to experience the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit. Prophets have a burning heart for receiving specific words or visions from God which will bring clarity to individuals or churches. Clarity comes by calling people to repentance, pointing out their sin; or through sharing visions, restoring lost spiritual sight. If those with the gift of prophecy have not yet received the baptism in the Spirit, their emphasis will be more on the Word of God, than specific words from God. If in the flesh, people with this gift may lose the New Testament tone of grace, becoming hard and judgmental, ministering the law's condemnation, rather than the gospel's love and mercy.

2) Serving: "If service, in our serving." The Amplified Bible calls this "practical service." That's the proper note. The person with this gift is always noticing things of a practical nature that will help an individual or the church, and then throwing themselves into the fray to get the job done. It's been said that love is an active verb; certainly these are the ones who put feet to their prayers. That is if they haven't slipped into the flesh. The danger here is leaping, before praying, and thereby taking the lead away from the Lord. This can lead to misguided efforts, feeling unappreciated or burn out, if left to the flesh. Pastors always appreciate the gift of service (not necessarily that of prophecy!) and they can and should help these good hearted workers learn the ways of wisdom. If this is your gift, try to remember that seeing a need isn't always a call of God for personal action; it may be a call to prayer instead.

3) Teaching: "The one who teaches, in his teaching." A teacher's focus is different than a prophet's in that their concern is more for the whole counsel of the Word of God with a willingness to leave the individual's response to conscience. Prophets are more inclined to zero

in on specifics and seek to close the deal. In our day a great line is drawn between preaching and teaching, but not in the Bible. Jesus' preaching was called teaching and so was that of the apostles—it's one of the main things they were known for.¹⁴ Teachers with an anointing will teach truth in order to elicit the saving transformation they know that particular truth can bring. Teachers in the flesh fall prey to focusing on getting the head knowledge right, filling minds with information, while leaving hearts empty and thirsting.

4) Exhorting: "The one who exhorts, in his exhortation." Exhortation is better known to us as encouragement, a word which means to give courage to the hearts of others. Exhorters are always looking for opportunities to do that. Who is cast down? Who needs building up? How can their spirits be lifted higher? Where a teacher wants to help you learn truths you don't know yet, an exhorter wants to help you believe what you already know. Notice how this plays out with different preaching styles: Some preachers are teachers at heart; others are exhorters. Meanwhile, some of the best exhorters don't have a public ministry. They just naturally lift the mood of individuals wherever they go. Watch out for one in the flesh, however, if you don't want to find out firsthand what the "gift of discouragement" looks like in operation.

5) Giving: "The one who contributes, in generosity." The Lord evidently calls some people to gather wealth, so that through them, He can bless others and the church. It's a tough job, but someone has to do it. The thing about these folks is their absence of greed and the evident delight they have in giving money or material help away. They usually seem consciously aware that their calling is to be a channel of blessing and they genuinely want to keep the river flowing. If they fall into the flesh, all bets are off: They may amass wealth for themselves alone, or seek a show of recognition for what they do give away.

6) Leading: "The one who leads, with zeal." The gift of administration includes the ability to supervise others, cast vision, assemble a team and chart a course all with unflagging "zeal" or diligence. If this is your gift, then know that the rest of us are grateful you have it. We need your energetic devotion to duty or things would really fall apart. We thank God for your integrity and willingness to sacrifice ordinary pleasures for the sake of the cause. Just please don't "lord" it over us, bossing us around! Jesus said that our leaders would be servants to us and those with this gift truly are—whenever they are in the Spirit. Otherwise...

7) Showing Mercy: "The one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness." Last, but not least, is the heart of the Body of Christ. People blessed with a mercy gift have hearts as big and warm as your mama's stove. They notice the hurting people among us and launch into prayer, then press in to draw them out. They care less about how you got into trouble, than how to get you out. Unlike teachers and prophets, they don't want to know if you are learning from the experience; they want you free of the pain. These are people you can trust with your heart. Unfortunately, when in the flesh, their own heart can take them down, if they don't learn how to cast every care and all that pain on the Lord.

Put it all together and you have a vision for the Body of Christ as a mighty warrior, able to tend its own wounds and refresh its own vision when all the parts are working together as designed. Discover your gift, learn how to walk in the Spirit with it, and find your place in the Body!

CHAPTER 11

THE BAPTISM OF POWER

Jesus actually told the first disciples “Don’t leave home without this.” So important is this spiritual empowerment that even the followers who had been trained by Him in person, who had received saving faith and the indwelling Spirit on Easter evening, even these dedicated believers were told to stay in Jerusalem and pray to be “baptized with the Holy Spirit.”¹⁵ If they needed it, don’t we?

“And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” Luke 24:49

Will You Ask for This?

Unlike the gift of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, this baptism of power is not automatic, involuntary or unheralded. You have to desire it and ask for it, sometimes praying and waiting diligently for it to come. On the other hand, it can just as easily show up with the first prayer uttered, but rarely does this empowerment come upon a person who isn’t looking for it. That’s how it was with the first disciples: They were told by Jesus to seek it through prayer. Why would we think it would be any different for us?

Why would anyone not go for this? I hope you never find out! Oh, you may one day say, as I and countless others could, that it was this or that fear or offense which hindered us *in the beginning*. But if you press in to receive it (as I hope you will) then there is that unidentifiable gift of grace within you carrying you past the many obstacles to receiving this blessing. In this regard it is similar to receiving salvation. There are plenty of obstacles in everyone’s life turning them from the way of faith, but once you have been saved, you really can’t imagine anyone refusing the offer.

The Surpassing Power

It is impossible to read the gospels and not be surprised and delighted by the supernatural events that seem so natural wherever Jesus goes. Miracles were happening around Him with breath-taking frequency. On at least two separate occasions He even sent His disciples out and they took part in it too. Just for the record, none of them had ever been to seminary or were previously trained as prophets or priests. They were regular people like you and me.¹⁶ It clearly surprised and delighted them that they were able to do many of the supernatural things that Jesus did, such as healing all manner of diseases and casting out demons.¹⁷

Where these supernatural events only meant to happen through Jesus’ earthly ministry? Evidently not! After His resurrection, Jesus carefully instructed His recently born-again disciples to wait for what He called “the promise of my Father.” They were to stay in Jerusalem until they could be “clothed with power from on high.”¹⁸ Did they just hang out, hoping it would show up? No, they sought it diligently, praying for it to come to them. Once it arrived, the supernatural flow of miracles broke forth all over again, along with extreme boldness in witnessing. The Book of Acts chronicles the way that this



original band of regular folks became strong in the Word of the Lord and in deeds of power by the Holy Spirit.

Were these supernatural events only meant to happen through the ministry of the apostles? Definitely not! The Early Church for the first two centuries was characterized by miracles and deeds of power. These continued in sporadic outbreaks throughout the next 18 centuries, often through uniquely gifted individuals, rather than trained clergy. In fact healing miracles and supernatural deeds have always been one of the primary qualifications for bestowing the designation of sainthood by the Roman Catholic Church. The RC's are not alone in this. Periods of revival, seasons of persecution, the birthing of new movements have also witnessed the supernatural workings of God through devoted individuals. Since the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement began in the early 1900s, however, millions of people have been moving in the supernatural operations of the Holy Spirit for miracles, healings and demonic deliverance.

Birthing the revelation of the baptism of power back into the church was both joy and battle for those early Pentecostals. Ironically, the movement was born in a stable at Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California (sound familiar?).¹⁹ For years it struggled to survive outside the camp due to the entrenched ridicule and hostility of the mainline denominations which rejected the truth of the revelation they had received. Now, it is the largest and fastest growing branch of Christianity in the world. You can be a part of it, too.

Why Don't We Get this Automatically?

Why didn't we get the baptism of power in the starter kit God gave us when we became born again?²⁰ That's a fair question. No explanation is given, though there are two kinds of facts which show us that it usually comes later: Biblical facts and the personal experience of Christians. The Biblical fact is that it came later for the disciples. They were born again in the Upper Room on the evening of the Resurrection and received the indwelling Spirit at that time. The baptism of power came 50 days later on the day of Pentecost, after praying and waiting for it as Jesus directed.

The early Pentecostal pioneers at the end of the 19th century were deliberately seeking this experience to be restored to the church. Ever since then, the majority of Christians who have received it, experienced it as coming *after* their salvation experience, not concurrent with it. For this reason it has often been called the "second blessing," though in reality there are no limits to the revelatory experiences Christians can have. These facts show us that it often comes later, but they don't tell us why.

Perhaps, although this is mere supposition, the Lord has intended for it to be separate in order that the beauty and power of the baptism in the Spirit would not overshadow the beauty and power of having the Holy Spirit dwelling secretly and silently within us. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is united to us—it doesn't come and go as the manifestation of the Holy Spirit does when the gifts of power are in operation. It is certainly good for us to know that salvation and the indwelling Spirit go hand in hand. That way our salvation-confidence can be based upon our faith in what the unchanging Word of God says that Christ has done for us, regardless of our feelings.

With the baptism of the Spirit feeling and experience rise to the forefront. Moving in the power gifts requires attentiveness to the manifest presence of the Holy Spirit. The anointing of His Presence comes and goes like the wind, and so does our sense of His leading or directions. That's no foundation

for confidence about our eternal position in Christ. From this standpoint it is an extremely good thing that our salvation doesn't depend upon sensing the Holy Spirit, but in believing God's Word alone.

What Comes with It?

These are observations based on general experience, so there are plenty of exceptions in real life. This is just to get you started in recognizing some of the benefits of this experiential encounter with the Holy Spirit. The best way to find out what the baptism in the Spirit is all about is to seek it wholeheartedly and then, when it comes your way, you will be able to explore it from the inside, not the outside.

1) A greater sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. Many Christians (not all) who only have the indwelling Spirit display very little practical awareness of the Holy Spirit's day to day operations in their lives. For them the Holy Spirit is indeed the "Mystery Person" of the Trinity. This is never the case for believers who have received the baptism of power. Not only do they know that they have met the Holy Spirit, they have a graced ability from that encounter to connect the dots of personal experience and recognize the Holy Spirit's presence and activity in all kinds of ways that they had previously attributed to other causes.

2) A greater ability to comprehend the scriptures. Unquestionably, there have always been pastors and teachers who could understand and communicate the Word of God, regardless of whether or not they received the baptism of power. Nevertheless, for the vast majority of Christians the Bible is a difficult book to penetrate and comprehend. Those who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, however, universally report that they now have a much greater ability to read the scriptures and receive revelation directly from them. The answer to this riddle is easy: The Holy Spirit who wrote the scriptures is, in some significant way, more personally known and accessible to them.

3) A greater ability to engage in spiritual warfare. The discerning of spirits is one of the nine manifestation gifts of the Spirit.²¹ Not everyone who is baptized in the Holy Spirit becomes a vessel for the full manifestation of this gift to operate, just as not all Christians are gifted at evangelism, but every Christian can share their faith. Similarly, few Spirit baptized believers see into the invisible realm, but most of them typically display a greater sensitivity to the presence of evil spirits as well as the Holy Spirit. They are willingly trained as spiritual warriors for intercession or for demonic deliverance. This does not guarantee the accuracy of their discernment, any more than having sight guarantees you won't walk into a door jamb or slip stepping off a curb. But it does give you a practical advantage over an unsighted person.

4) A greater potential for being led by the Spirit. An enhanced ability comes with the empowerment to sense the leading, prompting, checking and grieving of the Holy Spirit. This does not mean that all individuals choose to submit to these overtures, but for those who do, a heightened awareness of and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit is indispensable for being guided by the Lord step by step through the day. Just look at the way Paul was guided by the Holy Spirit. Certainly, he put a lot of stock in the Word of God, but he followed the path the Holy Spirit led him by within boundaries set by the Word. Jesus didn't give us only a Book to follow; He gave us His Holy Spirit to lead us as well.



5) A greater ability to pray for healings and miracles. Without doubt God hears every prayer and heals people at times in all denominations and churches. Unquestionably, His sovereign will is inscrutable. Every one of us experiences perplexing, heart-breaking times when prayers go unanswered. No one bats 100%. Even 5% would be a great average where dramatic, immediate answers to prayer for healing is concerned. Having said this, it is nevertheless a fact of history that Pentecostalism was birthed—just like the Early Church was birthed—through vast occurrences of supernatural power for healings and deliverances. And it continues to this day.

If you want to see tremendous miracles and multitudes of healings you may have to travel to the Third World, but you will only find it being done there through Holy Spirit baptized and empowered individuals and churches. As a general rule, only Spirit baptized believers move in the manifestation or power gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophecy, wisdom, knowledge, discerning spirits, miracles, healing, faith, tongues and interpretation of tongues. Though these gifts have some counterparts in ordinary Christian life, as supernatural manifestations they have a unique character all their own.

6) A greater boldness for spreading the gospel. Because of the qualities listed above and because of the enabling power of the Holy Spirit baptism, there is often more boldness and success in spreading the gospel—just as Jesus said there would be. Remember that world evangelism was His stated reason for having his born again disciples pray for “power from on high.” Do not think of this simply as sharing faith and preaching the word. The truly powerful combination then, as now, is signs and wonders (healings and miracles) *accompanying* the Word.²²

What Doesn't Come?

Maturity and true Christian character cannot be conveyed to us by any gift. They must be cultivated over time. The baptism of power is made available to empower us for witnessing to the Risen Christ, for deeds of power, and by enhancing our life in Christ with greater conscious connection to the Holy Spirit. Character and integrity are cultivated in us by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit—if we are attentive to His work in us. By convicting, convincing, and judging us where sin and righteousness are concerned, the Holy Spirit cleanses us of our old ways and enables us to live as new creations.

The indwelling Spirit is essential for our being able to experience, cultivate and live filled with the fruit of the Spirit—peace, love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. It is He who lifts us into new life and then flows through us, carrying us with peace and freedom from one moment to the next whenever we are released by faith-surrender to Jesus. You don't need to be baptized with power to experience this or excel at this. That's not what the baptism is about, though it certainly should bring enhancements to our ability to abide in Christ and live by the Spirit.

Sadly, many who have been baptized in the Spirit fail to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. Please, guard against this. The baptism of power does not guarantee spiritual growth. It is not a short cut to maturity, the fruit of the Spirit, real holiness, integrity or character. You can be baptized in the Spirit and display none of these essential elements of a faithful believer. Don't let that be you! The truth is that with the proper combination of these two gifts any believer can become a valiant warrior who advances the Kingdom. Jesus knew the risks and still He commanded His disciples to pray and seek this empowerment “from on high.” Why not take Him up on the offer?

A Prayer to be Baptized in the Holy Spirit

Lord Jesus, I want everything You have for me! I don't care what others might say or think: I only care about You and what You desire to do in my life. Just as it says in Your Word, I am now asking for you to baptize me in the Holy Spirit. Help me set aside any fears or doubts I might have, and open wide to receive this "power from on high" which You alone pour out upon Your believing people. I declare to You this day that I am willing to receive the gift of tongues and any of the nine gifts of power that You would choose to give me. May I always be willing to use them, not for my own advancement, but for Your glory and the good of Your people. Help me persevere in prayer and expectancy until the Holy Spirit comes upon me with power.

CHAPTER 12

PRAYING IN TONGUES

Do you have to? No, but you can if you want to and you just may want to. Paul did. In fact he was glad that he prayed in tongues more than the people to whom his letters were addressed. Since he also wrote more of the New Testament than anyone else, he ought to know why something this scandalous is so secretly good!

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. 1 Corinthians 14:18

How It Began

It is worth remembering that the gift of tongues came as a complete surprise. No one in the Upper Room was seeking tongues: *They were all seeking power.* Just ten days earlier they had been commanded by Jesus to stay in Jerusalem and pray for "power from on high" that would help them spread the good news of His resurrection and do the supernatural works He had done.²³ Apparently Jesus didn't consider that being born again and receiving the indwelling Spirit (from Him personally!) was sufficient for completing anyone's assignment under the New Covenant. So there they were, "gathered in one place" in prayer and expectancy for the arrival of something Jesus wanted them to have.

What came was the "the baptism of the Holy Spirit." The first outward sign of this empowering experience was the sound of a "mighty rushing wind"; next came "divided tongues as of fire" resting above each one; then came what we call the private prayer language. These devoted men and women had begun by praying in their native language, but when the baptism of the Spirit occurred their prayers and praises shifted into languages they had never spoken before.²⁴ Since there was no need for an interpretation—this was a private meeting of disciples—they simply praised God with these new languages out of the abundance of emotion welling up within them, evidently trusting the Lord to understand the content of their speech.²⁵



Then the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:1-4

What then ensued was offense and controversy. It has surrounded and hounded the practice of tongues ever since. The exuberant, exhilarated, ecstatic gathering got noisy! On festival days Jerusalem was packed with people from all over the Mediterranean basin. It didn't take long to draw a multitude of "amazed and astonished" onlookers. No doubt some sensed the spiritual nature of what was taking place; others mocked, deriding them for being drunk on "new wine." That was a very interesting observation in light of Jesus' comparison of His ministry to new wine, but it wasn't intended as a compliment to either Jesus or His disciples.²⁶ When confronted with strange and bewildering occurrences some are intrigued; others are frightened. This division continues into our own day.

Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? ...we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine." Acts 2:5-8, 11-13

Peter took good advantage of the situation and steered the people's attention to the Hebrew Scripture prophecy where power such as this was promised to be given in the "latter days"—days which had now arrived along with the astounding signs. Peter spoke to shift their focus from the sign which was offending them to the salvation Jesus offers and the baptism of power they, too, could receive. He was the first, but certainly not the last, Pentecostal preacher to try to get people to look past the offense of tongues to see the gift in a wider, more inviting, context. Following in his footsteps, we now turn to examine the private prayer language in the wider context of many scriptures.

Is It Necessary?

Tongues are not necessary for getting anyone to heaven. For that you must be born again through faith alone in Christ alone.²⁷ If that is all you are looking for, then you needn't look any further. But Jesus would want you to. Remember, it was the Lord who commanded His first believers to seek the baptism of power. When they received it, tongues came with it. Are tongues, therefore, necessary for receiving the baptism in the Spirit? That's putting the question the wrong way around. Tongues are a sign that the baptism in the Spirit has been received. It certainly operated in that way for the leaders of the Early Church who expected this sign to come forth when they prayed for the Spirit baptism.

Peter saw the sign of tongues falling on Cornelius' household as he preached to them which indicated to him that they had received the Holy Spirit. In this incident faith-conversion and Spirit baptism occurred at the same time. Peter also learned from this experience that water baptism doesn't have to come first.



While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days. Acts 10:44-48

When Paul came across twelve believers in Greece who had not "received the Holy Spirit," he prayed for them and they began speaking in tongues. This was evidence enough that they had received the same baptism of power as the disciples at Pentecost.

And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ...On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. Acts 19:2, 5-6

Even the unbelieving magician, Simon, saw the sign as evidence that power from the Holy Spirit had been received.

Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." Acts 8:17-19

In light of these passages we can see that the gift of tongues, or the private prayer language, and the baptism of the Spirit go together. We can't say that it's impossible to be baptized in the Holy Spirit without speaking in tongues (for nothing is impossible with God). But we can say it would be an unusual breach of the Biblical pattern. Tongues are *the* sign that the baptism of power has been received. We can also say from this that if you want to pursue the supernatural workings of Holy Spirit, you will need to be open to receiving the prayer language. It is not for us to dictate to the Lord how He should empower us.

What's It for?

Tongues would be interesting enough if they were merely a sign of the mighty power which comes with the baptism in the Spirit. It is a gateway, therefore, leading to the nine gifts of power coming up in the next chapter.²⁸ However, the private prayer language is more than a sign or a gateway to better things: It carries powers of its own.

Prayer in tongues "builds up" the believer. The private prayer language is always available to us for praying or singing, either silently or aloud. This strengthens us in our inner spirit.



But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit.
Jude 20

The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. 1 Corinthians 14:4

Speaking with tongues and deliverance are signs that go with believing. Christians who speak in tongues also exhibit boldness and willingness to do the work of demonic deliverance.

And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues. Mark 16:17

Praying in tongues is a way of thanking, praising and glorifying God.

For they heard them talking in [unknown] tongues (languages) and extolling and magnifying God. Acts 10:46 AMP

What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also. 1 Corinthians 14:15-16

Praying in tongues is a way of interceding for others. This is especially helpful when we don't know what to pray for, or when we want to keep on praying, but are feeling hindered by saying the same thing over and over again.

Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints. Ephesians 6:18

Praying in tongues provides direct access between our spirit and God's Spirit. It releases the deep burdens within our hearts, cares and concerns that we may only dimly comprehend. Not only that, but by praying in tongues, we literally give the Holy Spirit an opportunity to use our own tongue to intercede through us.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:26-27

Paul desired that every believer would speak in tongues—as well as prophecy.

Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophecy. 1 Corinthians 14:5

Desire to receive and cultivate your own prayer language. Then perhaps prayer in tongues in public and prophecy will come as additional gifts.

Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret... For you may be giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up. 1 Corinthians 14:13, 17

CHAPTER 13

NINE GIFTS OF POWER

Jesus never intended for His church to be powerless or penniless. Just as the tithe is the Lord's provision for material supply, so the baptism in the Spirit is His provision for supernatural supply. Neither is forced on anyone, but when believers come into obedience, watch out—the windows of heaven open wide.²⁹ Through the baptism in the Spirit, Jesus pours out gifts that will manifest as signs and wonders for the sake of ministry to someone He wants to bless.

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:7

A Context for Understanding

The main passage concerning the nine gifts of supernatural power is Paul's account in 1 Corinthians 12:1-12 where they are set within a wider context. Since he was writing to a church that was experiencing these gifts and was already familiar with how they worked, Paul doesn't take time to describe them.³⁰ That's a pity for us, because many of us grew up in churches devoid of these supernatural operations.

Experience is the best teacher when it is available; absence of experience gives false ideas plenty of room to grow. Nevertheless, we can surmise what these gifts would have looked like then, by their appearances in other passages of scripture and by the way they are breaking forth in Charismatic and Pentecostal churches where the baptism of the Spirit is flourishing today. Before we examine the individual gifts, let's look at the context Paul gave them.

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. 1 Corinthians 12:1

According to St. Paul, the very first thing that we need to know "concerning spiritual gifts" is to avoid being "uninformed." Learning about something is usually the first step towards doing it, but it is also a necessary step towards allowing others to do a thing. Why does that matter? In western churches many people have pulled away from the supernatural operations of the Holy Spirit due to fear and false teaching. By being uninformed of the truth, they not only aren't



seeking to make themselves available for God to work through them, they are actively hindering others from going forward.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

The whole of the Trinity is involved in the operation of these gifts: The Holy Spirit who works through the gift we are given, the Lord Jesus whose church is being served by the gift, and God the Father who oversees it all for the sake of everyone involved. Elsewhere Paul will describe other gifts and their place in the Body of Christ.³¹ Here his concern is only for certain gifts he now calls “manifestations of the Spirit.” Whatever is “manifest” has been brought to the light. It is something obvious and evident. These are gifts which make it obvious that God is at work through them. They display supernatural power in a way that the other gifts do not.

All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:1-12

Because these gifts are manifestations of the Spirit, it is God alone who “apportions”—who chooses who, when and where. Although these “activities” can be counterfeited by the enemy, the operation of the true gifts is entirely under the Holy Spirit’s control. They can’t be worked up by human effort. This is an important point for discerning how these gifts differ from normal human abilities. For instance, anyone who teaches can convey intellectual knowledge about a subject, but that is not what is meant by the “word of knowledge.” We look to doctors for healing, but their gifts are not “gifts of healings.” Certainly, God may work through doctors and teachers (let’s hope He does!), but His work is hidden, not manifest, except in outcome. These nine gifts manifest *during* the process of ministering to others.

The Nine Gifts of Power

For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 NKJV

1) “The word of wisdom.” Wisdom is available to everyone who asks for it or seeks it.³² The whole of Proverbs, for instance, is devoted to helping us gain practical wisdom and understanding for daily living. This accumulation of good sense and insight is akin to, but not exactly, what is meant by “the word of wisdom.”



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Solomon's most famous judgment gives us an example of this gift in operation. Having previously prayed for wisdom, God gave Solomon the perfect solution to a troubling dilemma: Which prostitute was the true mother of the child who died and which was lying. Solomon's decision in the case revealed to all Israel that that God was with him, giving wisdom.

Then the king answered and said, "Give the living child to the first woman, and by no means put him to death; she is his mother." And all Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered, and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to do justice. 1 Kings 3:27-28

2) "The word of knowledge." This gift has a very strong prophetic component, giving "knowledge" to both the one who receives it and the one being ministered to that God is at work in a given situation. This elevates the faith level of everyone present for whatever it is that the Lord desires to do. Often, however, it doesn't seem like a word at all. In the context of a healing service it may be a sense of pain felt by the prayer minister in a very specific part of their body.

When that "word" is spoken out ("Someone here has ringing in their left ear that God wants to heal."), a person in the congregation with that condition will usually experience increased faith, often receiving healing as a direct result. When the blind man was told Jesus wanted to see him, his faith level was certainly enhanced. Jesus saw his response, noted the faith, and the healing happened.

And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way. Mark 10:49-52

3) "Faith." All who believe in Jesus have already received the gift of faith, so saving faith or faith in Christ's death and resurrection is not what is meant by this gift.³³ This gift conveys a supernaturally sustained ability to trust God in a specific situation or to believe for a specific thing that the Lord wants to accomplish. Persons who receive it don't have to work at believing God against what may seem like impossible odds.³⁴ They only have to make sure they don't lose what they have received.

Often this ability to believe with heightened faith is activated by a specific word quickened (make alive to you) from scripture or received directly from the Spirit. David's confident faith for killing Goliath seems to have been sustained by this kind of gift.



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**And David said, "The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."
And Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you!" 1 Samuel 17:37**

4) "Gifts of healings." There are so many things about us that can go wrong: physical sickness, systemic disease, organ failure, accidental injury, mental disease, and emotional wounds. It's no wonder that many "gifts" for "healings" are needed.

Everyone should pray for healing, all of us can seek to receive a greater capacity for effective prayer, but certain individuals have already been unquestionably gifted by the Lord for healing. Many of them are consciously aware of an anointing from the Lord which signals His Presence upon them to heal someone. Sometimes it is a sensation of physical warmth on their hands; at other times it may be an ability to see faith upon someone, as with Paul in Lystra.

And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked. Acts 14:8-11 NKJV

5) "The working of miracles." Of course, sudden healings are miracles in themselves, but what is (likely) intended here are those activities of God which affect the natural order, not the human body—what are usually termed "signs and wonders" in the Hebrew scriptures.³⁵ Nature, too, can go awry. Jesus rebuked the wind for His disciples' sake. God stopped the mouths of lions for Daniel's sake. He also brought forth water from a rock and provided *manna* in the wilderness for His chosen people.

We, too, need miracles of all kinds in our lives: miracles of escape from imminent danger or looming debt; miracles of provision; miracles of deadly forces in nature stopped or turned aside. We have an awesome God-given ability to speak even to mountains, commanding nature just as Jesus did.

And he said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once. When the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?" And Jesus answered them, "Truly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' it will happen." Matthew 21:19-21

6) "Prophecy." There are many levels to the prophetic. At the entry level is the kind of seeking we all do in prayer to find a word of encouragement or just the right book from an inspired author to match a friend's need. Jesus says that all of His sheep hear His voice. Some do more than others.



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Those with a prophetic gift hear more frequently and more specifically from the Lord by means of a language of prophetic communication that may include dreams, visions, symbols and pictures, even more than words. This does not mean they get it right all of the time, but that they develop a dependable track record for accuracy which makes it worthwhile for others to pay attention to, weigh, and sift their sayings. Agabus' prophetic gift helped the church prepare for a famine.

Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). So the disciples determined, everyone according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. Acts 11:27-29

7) "Discerning of spirits." Having been active in the field of demonic deliverance, I can testify that there are at least two levels to the operation of this gift. There are some people (myself at times) who can discern by inward sense which demon needs to be cast out of a person, which spirits are oppressing a church or other organization, and even where angels or demons may be positioned around a room. There are others who have been given sight to see into the invisible realm that surrounds us all.

I have worked with many people who evidently had this ability, whose credibility and Christian character gave support to what they reported seeing. In battlefield conditions having someone with this gift is like having a spy behind enemy lines. To Balaam's chagrin, however, his donkey saw the angel blocking their path before he did. Nevertheless, it was a good thing that he listened to what the donkey discerned.

And the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Is it my habit to treat you this way?" And he said, "No." Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face. Numbers 22:30-31

8) "Different kinds of tongues." In addition to "tongues" or languages that can be learned by the usual human means, there are tongues "of men and of angels" which are given by God for His own specific purposes.³⁶ On the day of Pentecost everyone in the Upper Room was baptized in the Holy Spirit and given an ability to speak human languages that they could not have previously known. This was a sign to the multitudes who heard them "speaking in their own tongue"—a convincing display of God's power which led to Peter's sermon and the conversion of 3000.³⁷

There are also "tongues of angels" by which the Lord may be worshiped or entreated. These tongues have no human counterpart. The tongues spoken of here may be of either variety, but the setting is public worship, which is why it is stipulated that an interpretation should be given, something that is completely unnecessary if they are



simply a part of the person's private prayer language. Such a setting requires interpretation for the sake of proclaiming the prophecy it contains.

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... So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church. 1 Corinthians 14:5, 12

9) “The interpretation of tongues.” Interpreting tongues which are publicly uttered is necessary for the Lord to accomplish what the tongues describe. Without the interpretation coming forth, no one knows what was said. No one can even be confident that the tongues conveyed a message from the Lord or were initiated by Him, rather than from of the speaker's own soul.

This gets tricky really fast because the speaker has to have faith that someone is present who will be able to interpret what he/she believes God has prompted them to say (perhaps that will be themselves); likewise, the interpreter has to have faith to believe that they are hearing from God at least enough of the message to launch out in faith to let it flow in fullness.³⁸

Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. 1 Corinthians 14:13

Learning about these gifts is not the same thing as doing them, but it is a necessary beginning. To go further you will need a fellowship of like-minded believers who are committed to discovering how to make themselves available to God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit at this level. You can be sure that there are others who are pursuing these things of God, as well as the Lord Himself. Passion for Jesus and compassion for others will carry anyone a long way towards the unfolding of every gift the Holy Spirit desires to release through us—if we don't set preconceived limits to what is possible. You can be sure that the Lord doesn't!

¹ Hebrews 2:14-18: *He had to be made like his brothers in every respect...*

² Our confidence in God's loving plans for us is what gives the Lord pleasure; He can take “no pleasure” when we “draw back” since such fearfulness is never in our best interest: Hebrews 10:37-39: *If he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him...*

³ Matthew 3:13-15: *John would have prevented him...*

⁴ John 5:19: *The Son can do nothing of his own accord...*

⁵ Luke 11:20: *It is by the finger of God [the Holy Spirit] that I cast out demons...*

⁶ John 14:12: **Whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do...**

⁷ Psalms 45:7: **God has anointed you with the oil of gladness...**

⁸ Notice that God is at work in us to “will” and “to do.” He is giving us the desires and providing us with abilities in carrying them out: Philippians 2:12-13: **For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**

⁹ The Holy Spirit has been “with us” since conception. He has always been our Teacher and life coach whether we knew it or not. It’s just that until conversion, He had to stay on the outside and couldn’t teach us the things of the Lord, or of the spiritual life as He now does from *within* us: John 14:16-17: **You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.**

¹⁰ Colossians 3:15: **And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.**

¹¹ Proverbs 3:5-6: **Trust in the Lord with all your heart... and he will make straight your paths.**

¹² Romans 8:12-14: Notice that we have to put aside the flesh in order to be led by the Spirit: **But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**

¹³ Galatians 5:16-17: This is the spiritual “tug of war” which goes on in every Christian’s life: **The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and... the Spirit are against the flesh.**

¹⁴ Acts 2:42-43: **And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching...**

¹⁵ Acts 1:5: *John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit...*

¹⁶ Or “a regular person” as I used to be until I got seminary trained. Sadly, professional theological training didn’t help with moving in the supernatural. It actually helped “kill” it off me for a while. Seminary can devour the “simple faith” needed for God to work.

¹⁷ In Luke 10:17-20 we see the disciples’ delight in the supernatural power that Jesus had entrusted them with. It is so great that Jesus sought to refocus their attention away from their recent experience, back to their eternal position: **Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.** In Luke 9:1-6 we are simply told that the twelve were healing everywhere: **And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.**

¹⁸ Luke 24:48-49: **Stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.**

¹⁹ The birth of the modern Pentecostal movement took place in a stable at Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California during a revival that began in 1906 and went around the world.

²⁰ The “starter kit” includes, but is not limited to: 1) Knowing who Jesus is, 2) Experiencing the forgiveness of our sins, 3) Receiving the hope of heaven, 4) Having the Holy Spirit within us, and 5) Believing that the Bible is God’s Word.

²¹ 1 Corinthians 12:10: **To another the ability to distinguish between spirits.**

²² This is merely one of many examples of the way the gospel spread: Acts 14:3: **The Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.** (For more examples simply enter “signs and wonders” into a search program.)

²³ Jesus first gave the command to wait for this empowerment on the evening of His resurrection (50 days earlier): Luke 24:49: **Stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.**; Later, on the day of His Ascension (10 days earlier), He repeated the command: Acts 1:4-8: **You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.**

²⁴ The group included Mary, mother of Jesus, and other women who had been following Jesus: Acts 1:14: **Together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.**

²⁵ Paul’s directions in 1 Corinthians 14 make it clear that the preferred Early Church practice was to have someone give an interpretation for publically uttered tongues, if those tongues were a part of a public worship service in which unbelievers might be present. That’s not the case here—the unbelievers were outside and only came around when they heard the commotion. What they overheard were private prayer tongues in earthly languages (their own), a

phenomenon well-attested to in Pentecostal and Charismatic circles in our day. The “gift of tongues” for public utterance is a manifestation of the Spirit conveying a prophetic message that needs interpretation. It is “apportioned” by the Holy Spirit in a specific situation, unlike the private prayer language which (once received) is always under the individual’s ability to begin and end. See the “Nine Gifts of Power.”

²⁶ Luke 5:36-38: **...but new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.**

²⁷ With the Protestant Reformation came the understanding and the phrase that we are saved by “grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.”

²⁸ 1 Corinthians 12:7-11: *To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom... the utterance of knowledge... faith... gifts of healing... the working of miracles... prophecy... the ability to distinguish between spirits... various kinds of tongues... the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.*

²⁹ Just as the Lord promised through Malachi, He opens windows in heaven and pours out a blessing. As great as the blessing on tithing is, the “outpouring” of the Spirit is even greater (see Chapter 7, “The Baptism of Power”): Malachi 3:10: **Bring the full tithes into the storehouse... I will... pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.**

³⁰ The charismatic experience of the Corinthian church was by no means unusual. In the first two centuries of the church these nine operations of supernatural power flourished along with the baptism of the Spirit which enabled their widespread growth. The Early Church was fully charismatic across the whole Mediterranean basin! The rare exception would have been a church lacking in these two features as modern scholarship has abundantly demonstrated. See Kilian McDonnell and George T. Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota; 1990.

³¹ Other gifts include the “ministerial” gifts or offices listed in Ephesians 4:11: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers; the “motivational” gifts for service listed in Romans 12:6-8: prophesy, service, teaching, exhortation, giving, mercy, and administration; and gifts individually mentioned: hospitality, intercession, missionary, exorcism, music, craftsmanship, and celibacy. Even natural talents and abilities are gifts from God and can be placed under His leadership in service through Him to others. Ultimately, every good gift comes from the Father, so all genuine gifts have a spiritual Source and connection.

³² James 1:5: **If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God... it will be given him.**

³³ Saving faith is described in Romans 10:13 and Ephesians 2:8-9: **By grace you have been saved through faith... not your own doing; it is the gift of God.**

³⁴ Jesus said that our primary “work” is to cultivate our faith—the gift of faith in Him that we have been given. It is understood by the Lord that most of our faith in Him (or for what He has promised to do) is something that we will have to work at maintaining: John 6:28-29: **This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.**

³⁵ Two obvious exceptions to this sweeping general statement would be the raising of people out of death and the recreation of organs or other body parts, both of which have been occurring in our day in surprising numbers.

³⁶ 1 Corinthians 13:1: **If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels...**

³⁷ Acts 2:4-7: **They were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.**

³⁸ My friend, Eddy Browning, who brought me to the Lord had a dead-on prophetic gift as well as discerning of spirits (I had seven demons cast out of me the night of my conversion). It was his gift of tongues combined with the interpretation of tongues that came to my rescue many times in the early years of my growth in Christ. I would call Eddy on the phone and lay out my trouble. He would pray in tongues; then when the interpretation came forth, I was set free by some insight it conveyed, and was fully satisfied I had heard from the Lord!