

# Discerning Your Spiritual Gifts



Holy Spirit • [BibleStudyDownloads.org](http://BibleStudyDownloads.org)

# Spiritual Gifts

# Spiritual Gifts and Pneumatology: The Study of the Holy Spirit

*Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary (JETS)*

Rick Griffith, ThM, PhD

Twentieth Edition  
© September 2025

1<sup>st</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> printings (795 copies; 1<sup>st</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> eds. July 95-July 12)  
27<sup>th</sup> printing (20 copies; 14<sup>th</sup> ed. Jan 16)  
28<sup>th</sup> printing (30 copies; 15<sup>th</sup> ed. Nov 21)  
29<sup>th</sup> printing (digital; 16<sup>th</sup> ed. Nov 21)  
30<sup>th</sup> printing (digital; 17<sup>th</sup> ed. Dec 22)  
31<sup>st</sup> printing (digital; 18<sup>th</sup> ed. July 25)  
32<sup>nd</sup> printing (digital; 19<sup>th</sup> ed. Aug 25)  
33<sup>rd</sup> printing (digital; 20<sup>th</sup> ed. Sept 25)





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>My Biographical Sketch.....</b>	<b>H</b>
<b>Course Grading .....</b>	<b>J</b>
Research Paper Grade Sheet .....	J
Research Paper Checklist.....	K
<b>PNEUMATOLOGY (STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT).....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>The Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit.....</b>	<b>i</b>
What Do You Think of the Holy Spirit? .....	i
The Personality of the Spirit.....	ii
Biblical Evidence for the Doctrine of the Trinity .....	iii
<b>The Work of the Spirit .....</b>	<b>ix</b>
The Spirit in Relationships .....	ix
Blasphemy Against the Spirit.....	xiv
The Indwelling & Sealing of the Spirit .....	xvi
Interpretive Issues on Spirit Baptism.....	xviii
The Baptism and Filling with the Spirit.....	xxii
Walking by the Spirit .....	xxiii
How the Spirit Leads Us .....	xxiv
Holy Laughter .....	xxv
Differences Between Emotional and Spiritual Laughter .....	xxx
Anatomy of Deception.....	xxxi
Normal Christian Meetings vs. Laughter Meetings .....	xxxii
Why are Charismatics Growing So Much in Singapore? .....	xxxiii
Being Slain in the Spirit .....	xxxiv
Other Ministries of the Spirit.....	xl
Sins Against the Spirit.....	xli
The Eschatology of the Spirit.....	xlii
Fruit and Gifts of the Spirit Contrasted.....	xlii
Fruit of the Spirit Defined.....	xliii
Fruit of the Spirit Compared.....	xliv
<b>DISCERNING &amp; USING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS .....</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>SPIRITUAL GIFTS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Objectives of the Sessions.....	1
Names of Those in My Discussion Group .....	1
Abbreviations Used in This Series.....	1
Basic Issues in 1 Corinthians 12.....	2
Distinguishing Natural Talents from Spiritual Gifts.....	2
The Basis and Nature of Spiritual Gifts.....	3
Why Study and Know Our Gifts? .....	3
Scriptural Commands Associated With Gifts .....	4
Spiritual Gifts Lists Worksheet.....	5
Lists of Spiritual Gifts in the New Testament .....	6
Overview and Categorization of the Gifts Chart.....	7
Abilities Sometimes Called Gifts .....	8
Author Comparison Chart .....	9
Dangers Associated with Spiritual Gifts .....	13
<b>Temporary Gifts.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Views on the Duration of Gifts.....	14
Scriptural Support for Temporary Gifts .....	16

Transitional Diagrams .....	19
Apostleship .....	20
Word of Wisdom .....	21
Word of Knowledge .....	22
Prophecy .....	23
Prophecy Versus Teaching .....	27
Distinguishing of Spirits .....	28
Speaking in Tongues .....	29
Tongues in Acts and 1 Corinthians.....	33
Tongues versus Prophecy .....	34
Interpretation of Tongues .....	35
Miracles .....	36
Healing .....	37
Power Evangelism.....	38
Temporary Gift Study Guide .....	42
<b>Permanent Gifts.....</b>	<b>43</b>
Permanent Gift Study Guide .....	43
How Many Gifts Does Each Believer Have? .....	44
Problem Passages .....	45
Gifts and Ministries .....	46
Speaking Gifts Comparison Chart .....	47
Teaching vs. Evangelism .....	48
Teaching .....	49
Evangelism .....	50
Contrasting the Pastor-Teacher and Exhorter .....	51
Pastor-Teacher .....	52
Exhortation.....	53
Serving Gifts Comparison Chart .....	54
Administration.....	55
Faith.....	56
Giving.....	57
Service.....	58
Showing Mercy.....	59
<b>Application .....</b>	<b>60</b>
Spiritual Gifts Inventory.....	60
Spiritual Gifts Inventory Worksheet .....	62
Spiritual Gifts Inventory Group Record .....	63
Spiritual Gifts Inventory Explanatory Supplement.....	64
How to Discern Your Spiritual Gifts .....	65
Questions to Help Discern Your Gifts .....	66
Ministry Opportunities at Our Church .....	68
How to Make Your Spiritual Gift Really Count .....	69
Guidelines for Using Your Spiritual Gift .....	70
<b>Readings on Spiritual Gifts .....</b>	<b>71</b>
Thomas R. Edgar—The Cessation of the Sign Gifts .....	71
F. David Farnell—Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? .....	80
Jack Deere—Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?.....	94
Robert A. Pyne’s Response to Deere’s Book .....	110
John F. MacArthur, Jr.—The Issue of Tongues.....	111
Wayne A. Grudem—Why Christians Can Still Prophecy .....	124
<b>Completed Handouts .....</b>	<b>129</b>
Basic Issues in 1 Corinthians 12.....	129
Distinguishing Natural Talents from Spiritual Gifts.....	130
The Basis and Nature of Spiritual Gifts.....	131
Why Study and Know Our Gifts? .....	131
Dangers Associated with Spiritual Gifts .....	132

## Syllabus

### I. Course Description

Non-Christians often blame *tragedies* on God. Likewise, Christians often blame *excesses* on the Holy Spirit. Who is He and what does He really do in our world? This two-part course explores what *the Bible* says about the person and work of the Spirit. Part 1 addresses His deity and ministries relating to the believer (e.g., baptism, filling, sealing, indwelling, sanctifying, fruit) and the unbeliever (e.g., calling, conviction, regenerating). Part 2 covers His gifting the saints with special abilities to serve Christ, including the controversial gifts of prophecy, tongues, miracles, and healing.

This course will follow a *blended learning* approach. This means that we have two means of instruction: (1) *face-to-face classroom learning* via the instructor supplemented by outside reading, as well as (2) *web-based individual learning* via two websites:

- (a) All course PowerPoint and notes can be downloaded at the Holy Spirit link at <http://www.biblestudydownloads.com>. Please note that it is available in both English and Arabic.
- (b) Online at <https://eu.hismoodle.com/login/?theme=rocket&school=jets&lang=en> you will find the quizzes.

### II. Course Objectives

By the end of the Pneumatology course (Part 1), the student should be able to...

- A. Prove the *personhood* and *deity* of the Holy Spirit, showing why each is important.
- B. Explain the various ministries of the Holy Spirit relating to the *believer* (e.g., baptism, filling, sealing, indwelling, sanctifying, fruit).
- C. Explain the various ministries of the Holy Spirit relating to the *unbeliever* (e.g., calling, conviction, regenerating).
- D. See the value of *Internet* learning by taking quizzes online.

By the end of the Spiritual Gifts course (Part 2), the student should be able to...

- E. *Define* the various spiritual gifts and *discern* these gifts in yourself and others.
- F. Explain *reasons for differing views* on the spiritual gifts and *evaluate* these biblically.
- G. Feel acquainted enough with pneumatology to *teach* it to others confidently.
- H. See the *relevance* of pneumatology to personal holiness, world mission, contemporary events, and MENA culture and religions.

### III. Course Requirements

- A. Readings (33%) of the next day's class notes and/or pertinent articles will be assigned for each session. Please stay up on your readings. On each online quiz, you will report whether you did your reading since the last quiz, including reading for the day of the quiz.
- B. Quizzes (33%) must be taken by midnight the night *before* the class period for which they are assigned. Half of the quiz grade will ask if you completed the readings since the last quiz (50 points per quiz), and half will generally comprise five questions (10 points each



or 50 points total). There are no makeup quizzes. Each quiz can be taken anytime to the due date, but will expire at midnight the night *before* class. Take this quiz by yourself (closed book, closed Bible, closed notes, and an open mind). Also, do not wait until just before the quiz closes, as the server cannot handle everyone taking it simultaneously. Furthermore, when taking the quizzes, do **not** let the timer reach zero. This will delete all of your answers! Instead, click the “submit my answers” button before the time limit so that your answers will be recorded in the database. Finally, please do not discuss the quiz with other students, as they may not have taken it yet.

- C. Position Papers (33%) will address controversial topics. These will be short (2-3 pages, single or double spaced), explaining alternate views on a topic, and your logic and Scripture for holding your view. Cite sources from varying viewpoints—but *these notes may not be used as a source* (except bibliographies).

Ass. #1: Prophecy. Define the gift of prophecy, noting any differences between OT and NT prophecy. Address from Scripture if NT prophecy is sometimes fallible (cf. Wayne Grudem or Michael Moriarty) or always infallible (cf. David Farnell), and if it still exists today. Cite sources from varying perspectives.

Ass. #2: Tongues. Explain from the NT what the gift of tongues is, including its purpose. Show whether the tongues of Acts are the same as those of 1 Corinthians and whether a “private use” for self-edification is biblically justified. Explain whether the genuine gift is available today. Cite sources from varying perspectives.

Ass. #3: Spiritual Gifts Inventory (required). Take this self-diagnostic inventory (pp. 60-61) to help discern your own spiritual gift(s). Then transfer your results to the Spiritual Gifts Inventory Worksheet (p. 62, top only) and bring them both to class for discussion.

- N.B. Each of the preceding requirements has a 3% grade penalty per class day late. Also, points may be deducted for not including your full name on assignments, exceeding the page limit, and improper grammar and spelling (including my name!).

#### IV. Bibliography

- \* Asterisks show books requested to be on reserve in the library (if available)

- A. General Works (and works difficult to classify as charismatic or non-charismatic)

\*Carson, D. A. *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12—14*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987. 229 pp.  
Carson holds to charismatic beliefs in some areas and no charismatic views in others.

\*Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. 3 vols. in 1. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983, 1984, 1985. 1302 pp.  
Evangelical (e.g., upholds inerrancy), exhaustive, readable, good with alternate views, useful for preaching and teaching due to Erickson’s extensive pastoral experience, considers the central theme of theology to be the magnificence of God, footnoted (better than the endnoting in Enns but not as helpful as them in bibliography and transliteration of Greek and Hebrew), no charts or glossary like in Enns and unfortunately holds to the progressive creationist view. Erickson is dean and professor of theology at Bethel Theological Seminary. Nondispensational premillennial, moderate Calvinist viewpoint.

Ferguson, Sinclair. *The Holy Spirit: Contours of Christian Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996.

Flynn, Leslie B. *19 Gifts of the Spirit*. Wheaton: Victor, 1974.

An excellent, thorough, and balanced treatment in a popular, interesting style by a Conservative Baptist pastor. Includes several illustrations and a chapter on each gift.

Gothard, Bill. “How to Identify Spiritual Gifts.” *Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts Seminar Syllabus*. Oak Brook, IL: IBYC (now Institute in Basic Life Principles), 1981.

\*Moriarty, Michael G. *The New Charismatics: A Concerned Voice Responds to Dangerous New Trends*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.

\*Packer, J. I. *Keep in Step with The Spirit*. Old Tappen, NJ: Revell, 1984. 301 pp.  
A balanced presentation of how to genuinely walk in the power of the Spirit.

Turner, Max. *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts*. UK: Hendriksen, 1996.

#### B. Charismatic Sources

Bennett, Dennis and Rita. *The Holy Spirit and You*. Plainfield, NJ: Logos, 1971.  
The Episcopal priest who introduced the charismatic movement into mainline denominations (founders of “Neo-Pentecostalism”).

Bridge, Donald and Phypers, David. *Spiritual Gifts and the Church*. London: IVP, 1973.

\*Bruner, Frederick Dale. *A Theology of the Holy Spirit: The Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament Witness*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970. 390 pp.

Bugbee, Bruce; Cousins, Don; and Hybels, Bill. *Network: The Right People... In the Right Places... For the Right Reasons*. Barrington, IL: Willow Creek Community Church and Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994. 150 pp.

This guide helps people understand not just their gifts but also their passion, style, spiritual maturity, and availability. It lists 23 gifts and includes numerous self-diagnostic surveys—including practical guides how to serve after one has discovered his/her gift.

\*Deere, Jack. *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit: A Former Dallas Seminary Professor Discovers That God Speaks and Heals Today*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Surprised by the Voice of God: How God Speaks Today Through Prophets, Dreams, and Visions*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995. 256 pp. US\$19.00

Graham, Billy. *The Holy Spirit*. Waco, TX: Word, 1978.

\*Green, Michael. *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1975; and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975. 223 pp.

\*Grudem, Wayne. *The Gift of Prophecy: In the New Testament and Today*. Eastbourne, Great Britain: Kingsway, 1988; and Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1988. 351 pp.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Leicester, England: IVP and Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994. 1264 pp. Holds to a non-cessation view of the gifts but a non-Pentecostal interpretation of Spirit baptism. Very readable and interacts well with evangelical scholars of various views. Arabic version available at The Program for Theological Education by Extension in Amman, Jordan (pteemail@ptee.org).

Horton, Harold. *The Gifts of the Spirit*. Burbank, CA: World Map, 1934; reprint, 1979.

Hyatt, Eddie L. *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity: A 20th Century Look at Church History from a Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspective*. P.O. Box 700276, Chicota, TX 74170: Hyatt International Ministries, Inc., 1996. 209 pp.

Kraft, Charles H. “What Kind of Encounters Do We Need in Our Christian Witness?” Subtitle: “Power encounter must be biblically balanced with truth and commitment encounters, if we are to succeed in our world mission.” *Evangelical Mission Quarterly* 27 (July 1991): 258-65.

Smedes, Louis D., ed. *Ministry and the Miraculous: A Case Study at Fuller Theological Seminary*. Pasadena, CA: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1987. 80 pp. Paper, US\$6.95. Reviewed by Robert P. Lightner in *Bib Sac* 145 (April-June 1988): 221.

Springer, Kevin, ed. *Power Encounters Among Christians in the Western World*. Introduction and afterward by John Wimber. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988. xviii+218 pp. Reviewed by Ken L. Sarles in *Bib Sac* 146 (October-December 1989): 460-61.

Wagner, C. Peter. *How to Have a Healing Ministry Without Making Your People Sick*. Eastbourne: Monarch, n.d. [?]

\_\_\_\_\_. "Healing Without Hassle." *Leadership* 6 (Spring 1986).

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Third Wave?" *Pastoral Review*, July-August 1983.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Third Wave Goes Public," *Christian Life*, January 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*. Ann Arbor, MI: Vine Books, Servant, 1988. 133 pp. Reviewed by Ken Sarles in *Bib Sac* 147 (January-March 1990): 111.

\_\_\_\_\_. "What Happens When You See Jesus," *Christian Life*, April 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*. Glendale, CA: Gospel Light, 1979.

\*White, John. *When the Spirit Comes with Power*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1989.

Williams, Don. *Signs, Wonders, and the Kingdom of God: A Biblical Guide for the Reluctant Skeptic*. Ann Arbor, MI: Vine Books, Servant Pub., 1989.

\*Wimber, John. *Power Evangelism*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1985; rev. ed., San Francisco: Harper and Row, and London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_, with Springer, Kevin. *Power Healing*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987, and London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1987. Reviewed by Roy B. Zuck in *Bib Sac* 145 (January-March 1988): 102-4.

\_\_\_\_\_, with Springer, Kevin. *Power Points: Your Action Plan to Hear God's Voice, Believe God's Word, Seek the Father, Submit to Christ, Take Up the Cross, Depend on the Holy Spirit, Fulfill the Great Commission*. New York: Harper Collins, 1991. 222 pp. \$15.95. Reviewed by Robert Pyne in *Bib Sac* 149 (Oct-Dec 1992): 505-6.

Yohn, Rick. *Discover Your Spiritual Gift and Use It*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1974.

### C. Non-Charismatic Sources

Babcock, Neil. *A Search for Charismatic Reality*. Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1985. (The personal testimony of a charismatic pastor who left the movement.)

Bridges, Donald. *Power Evangelism and the Word of God*. Eastbourne, England: Kingsway, 1987.

Derickson, Gary W. "The Cessation of Healing Miracles in Paul's Ministry." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 155 (July-September 1998): 299-315.

Doyle, Robert, ed. *Signs and Wonders and Evangelicals*. Hornebusge West, N.S.W., Australia: Lancer Books, 1987. 130 pp. \$6.50 pb. Reviewed by Ken Sarles in *Bib Sac* 146 (October-December 1989): 457-58. He says it is the best critique to date.

\*Edgar, Thomas R. *Miraculous Gifts*. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1983.



- \* \_\_\_\_\_. "The Cessation of the Sign Gifts." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 (October-December 1988): 371-86. (Excellent article—concise and readable, copied on pp. 71-79.)
- \* \_\_\_\_\_. *Satisfied by the Promise of the Spirit: Affirming the Fullness of God's Provision for Spiritual Living*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996. 283 pp. (Responds to Deere's *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* and updates Edgar's *Miraculous Gifts*.)
- \*Enns, Paul. *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. Chicago: Moody, 1989. 688 pp. CBD for US\$21.95.  
Most handbooks of theology are fairly brief works of about 150 pages consisting of brief articles that explain doctrines, heresies, movements, and leading men in the field of theology. This massive work is divided into five parts that cover biblical theology (in 16 chapters that survey the theology of all major biblical sections), systematic theology (bibliology, theology proper, christology, etc.), historical theology (surveying the major theological teachings of the ancient, medieval, Reformation, and modern eras), dogmatic theology (with chapters on Calvinistic, Arminian, covenant, dispensational, and Catholic theology), and contemporary theology. It has 45 chapters and an epilogue, 55 simple-to-understand charts, a 24-page glossary of terms and names, and several indexes (persons, subjects, and Scripture references), endnotes identifying sources quoted, and helpful bibliographies. Dispensational premillennial. Enns does not, however, address recent developments in "progressive dispensationalism" that have come about since 1989 through Robert Saucy, Darrell Bock, and Craig Blaising.
- \*Farnell, F. David. "Is the Gift of Prophecy for Today?" (Four Part Series) "The Current Debate about New Testament Prophecy." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 (July-September 1992): 277-303; "The Gift of Prophecy in the Old and New Testaments." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 (October-December 1992): 387-410; "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 150 (January-March 1993): 62-88; "When Will the Gift of Prophecy Cease?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 150 (April-June 1993).
- Gaffin, Richard B., Jr. *Perspectives on Pentecost*. Presb. & Reformed, 1974?. 127 pp.
- Geisler, Norman. *Signs and Wonders*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1988.
- Gross, Edward N. "Understanding the Miraculous Gifts in the Scripture." *Christian News*, February 2, 1987, pp. 13-15. Reviewed by John A. Witmer in *Bib Sac* 144 (October-December 1987): 464.
- \*MacArthur, John, Jr. *Charismatic Chaos*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. 415 pp.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Charismatics: A Doctrinal Perspective*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978. 224 pp.
- McRae, William. *The Dynamics of Spiritual Gifts*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976.
- \*Ryrie, Charles Caldwell. *The Holy Spirit*. Rev. ed. Chicago: Moody, 1965; rev. & expanded, 1997. 223 pp.  
Expands and updates his former book by the same title (Moody, 1965), which has been a standard non-charismatic Bible College text. Brief and readable. Now 80 pages longer, addressing "Holy Laughter," anointing, and prophecy [too briefly] with expanded indexes. A clear, biblical evaluation of an important area of theology.
- Sarles, Ken L. "An Appraisal of the Signs and Wonders Movement." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 (January-March 1988): 57-82. (See also his reviews of books above.)
- Stafford, Tim. "Testing the Wine from John Wimber's Vineyard." *Christianity Today*, 8 August 1986, p. 18.
- Unger, Merrill F. *The Baptism & Gifts of the Holy Spirit*. Chicago: Moody, 1974. 189 pp.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *New Testament Teaching on Tongues*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1971.

- \*Walvoord, John F. *The Holy Spirit: A Comprehensive Study of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*. Van Kampen, 1954; reprint, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1965. 288 pp.  
This older (non-charismatic) work does not address the mainline charismatic movement, errant prophecy, holy laughter, and other recent issues. However, it provides a most thorough *biblical* treatment of pneumatology, so it is worth our attention.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts." *Bib Sac* 143 (April-June 1986): 109-22.

- \*\_\_\_\_\_. *The Holy Spirit in the Church Today*. Chicago: Moody, 1973. 63 pp.  
A brief treatment documenting the ministries of the Holy Spirit from Scripture.

- \*Warfield, Benjamin Breckenridge. *Counterfeit Miracles*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1918; reprint, 1983.

### **Required Reading**

- \*Deere, Jack. *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit: A Former Dallas Seminary Professor Discovers That God Speaks and Heals Today*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993. 299 pp. CBD for US\$13.50.  
This recent work includes Deere's personal experience and interaction with Scripture often cited to support cessationism. As a former Cessationist, Deere clearly understands Cessationist arguments. Required readings from him are copied on pages 94-109 and 133-43.
- \*Edgar, Thomas. "The Cessation of the Sign Gifts." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 (October-December 1988): 371-86. (Reproduced in notes, 71-79.)  
Concise and readable. Provides the other side to Deere's view above. Edgar argues that some gifts have ceased based upon Scripture and the history of the church.
- \*\_\_\_\_\_. *Satisfied by the Promise of the Spirit: Affirming the Fullness of God's Provision for Spiritual Living*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996. 283 pp.  
Responds to Deere's *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* and updates Edgar's *Miraculous Gifts*. Required readings from him are copied on pages 144-51.
- \*Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Leicester, England: IVP & Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994. 1264 pp.  
An evangelical, massive work in simple English but with fresh insights. Includes a bibliography of other systematic theologies by perspective and page numbers, as well as personal application questions and popular hymns and choruses with each topic. Grudem teaches at Trinity International University in Deerfield, IL. Nondispensational premillennial, posttribulational, moderate Calvinist viewpoint. Unfortunately, Grudem teaches errant but inspired prophecy (called "inaccuracies of detail," p. 1052) and an imminent but posttribulational return of Christ (pp. 1100-1105). Arabic version available at The Program for Theological Education by Extension in Amman, Jordan (pteemail@ptee.org).

## V. Course Schedule

Quizzes cover only the readings for that week (generally five questions each worth 10 points).

Content from class sessions is *not* quizzed. One additional question will also ask if you completed the reading for that week for 50 points, so that each quiz has a possible 100 points. Sessions 1-6 apply to the Holy Spirit course, while sessions 7-12 address the Spiritual Gifts course.

Session	Sunday	Subject	Assignment	pp.
1	22 March	Syllabus & Introduction	No assignments (in class = notes, i)	
2	22 March	Pneumatology: (notes, i, xvi-xvii ) Spirit Personality & Deity	Notes, ii-xiii (Deity, Relationships & Prayer)	12
3	22 March	Spirit Ministries to the Unbeliever: Blasphemy, Holy Laughter, & Grace	Notes, xiv-xv (Blasphemy), xxv-xxxii (Holy Laughter), xxxix (The Spirit & Grace)	11
Session	Monday	Subject	Assignment	pp.
4	23 March	Spirit Indwelling, Sealing, Leading, & Slaying	Notes, xvi-xvii (Indwelling & Sealing), xxiv (Leading), & xxxiii-xxxviii (Slaying by the Spirit) Quiz 1	9
5	23 March	Spirit Baptism, Filling, & Fruit	Notes, xviii-xxiii (Baptism & Filling), xl-xliv (Ministries, Sins Against, & Fruit) Grudem, 763-787	11
6	23 March	<u>Gifts</u> : Intro & Lists	Grudem, 1016-31 (notes, 152-159)	16
Session	Tuesday	Subject	Assignment	pp.
7	24 March	Dangers & Durations of Gifts	Deere, 229-52 (notes, 94-110) = 23 Quiz 2	23
8	24 March	Foundational Gifts I: Apostle, Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge	Edgar, "Cessation," 371-86 (notes, 71-79) Assignment #1: Prophecy	16
Session	Wednesday	Subject	Assignment	pp.
9	25 March	Foundational Gifts II: Prophecy, Discernment	Grudem <i>article</i> (notes, 124-28) = 5 Farnell (notes, 80-93) = 28 Quiz 3	19
10	25 March	Sign Gifts: Miracles, Healing, Tongues, Interpretation	Deere, 99-115 (notes, 133-143) (Deere argues miracles here today) Assignment #2: Tongues	17
Session	Thursday	Subject	Assignment	pp.
11	26 March	Speaking Gifts: Teaching, Evangelism, Pastor-Teacher, Encouragement	Edgar "Conclusion," <i>Satisfied</i> , 250-64 (notes, 144-51) Quiz 4	15
12	26 March	Service Gifts: Administration, Faith, Giving, Service, Mercy Discerning Your Gifts	Assignment #3: Spiritual Gifts Inventory & Worksheet (notes, 54-70)	25

## VI. Other Matters

- A. Contacting Me: You can contact me at [drrickgriffith@gmail.com](mailto:drrickgriffith@gmail.com) or by WhatsApp at +962 7 9725-6010.
- B. Copying Class Notes: This is allowed as long as you give credit where credit is due and until you're rich from it. You may also copy all course PPT and translate them into other languages.



## My Biographical Sketch



**The Griffith Family**

Kurt & Cara (38) & Kadon (2), Stephen & Katie (36) with Jesse (6) & Norah (4), John & Chloe (32)

### Background

“Never say ‘never.’” Rick and Susan Griffith both learned this age-old tip the hard way.

Rick recalls sitting in his elementary school classes thinking, “If there’s one thing I’ll *never* become, it’s a *teacher*. Imagine saying the same stuff over and over, year after year!”

Yet after trusting Christ in junior high and beginning to teach the Word of God, Rick’s attitude changed. After his business degree at California State University, East Bay, a Master of Theology degree (Pastoral Ministries), and a Doctor of Philosophy degree (Bible Exposition) from Dallas Theological Seminary in Texas, Dr. Griffith soon found himself on the other end of the classroom—and loving it!

From Yucaipa, California, Susan also learned not to say “never.” As she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in piano at Biola University, several friends married and worked to put their husbands through three more years of seminary training. “I’ll *never* do that!” she exclaimed. Soon afterward, she invested three years (1981-1983) singing with her future husband in the Crossroads, Campus Crusade’s traveling music team in Asia. This nine-member Philippines-based group shared Christ in the Philippines, China, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, Macau, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore.

In December 1983, Susan’s “never” became a reality. She and Rick were married, and like Jacob and Rachel of old, Susan also worked for her mate. During these seven seminary years, Rick served as a pastor, corporate chaplain, and International Students church consultant. Susan taught women’s Bible studies and often ministered by singing. Their primary church in Texas is Christ Chapel Bible Church in Fort Worth.

They have three sons: Kurt (38 yrs.) works in IT with his business analysis wife Cara in Seattle at their HR consulting firm Tandem Motion with two grandsons (2022 & 2025), Stephen is a United B777 pilot trainer (36 yrs.) with wife Katie in Denver with two grandkids (2019 & 2021), and John (Griff) and his wife Chloe work in IT graphic design in California (32 yrs.), respectively.

## Ministry

From 1991 to 2021, the Griffith home was in Singapore, where Rick served as Doctor of Ministry director with 26 other full-time faculty at Singapore Bible College. SBC has 495 students from 26 countries and 25 denominations, as well as many professionals. He began by teaching Old and New Testament Survey, Old and New Testament Backgrounds, Eschatology (the study of future things), Evangelism, Pastoral Epistles, Psalms, Homiletics (preaching), Hebrew Exegesis, and four Old Testament exposition courses. Then, for years, he also taught Pentateuch, Gospels, Eschatology (theology of the future), Ecclesiology (theology of the church), and Pneumatology (theology of the Holy Spirit). In recent years, he mostly taught Bible Exposition classes, including Homiletics, OT Foundations, and OT & NT Survey. He also wrote three Advanced Studies in the Old and New Testament courses at Internet Biblical Seminary ([www.internetseminary.org](http://www.internetseminary.org)).

Dr. Griffith loves the variety and strategic nature of his teaching. He has invested his life into Anglicans from Sri Lanka, Lutherans from Singapore, Presbyterians from Korea, Conservative Baptists from the Philippines, and missionaries from Campus Crusade, OMF, and Operation Mobilisation—sometimes all in one class! One class had 17 of the 20 students training for ministry outside of Singapore. Nearly all SBC graduates entered pastoral or missionary ministries due to Asia's shortage of trained leaders.

Ministry opportunities abound. Over the years, Rick and Susan conducted premarital counseling for students with their home's open door to students and guests traveling through Singapore. In 1992, they also helped start International Community School, an expatriate Christian K-12 school in Singapore, now with more than 400 students. WorldVenture has seconded them to these organizations over the years.

Dr. Griffith also enjoys several other partnerships. He also serves as Translation Coordinator for "The Bible... Basically International" seminars; web author & editor, Internet Biblical Seminary; and itinerate professor for 73 trips throughout Asia and the Middle East at Lanka Bible College (Sri Lanka), Myanmar Evangelical Graduate School of Theology, Union Bible Training Center (Mongolia), and Biblical Education by Extension training in three restricted access countries. In 2021, he joined Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary as a Professor of Bible Exposition and has been Academic Dean since 2024.

Dr. Rick also began Crossroads International Church, Singapore, where "Pastor Rick" served as pastor-teacher from 2006-2021. See [CICFamily.com](http://CICFamily.com).

In 2009, Dr. Rick began BibleStudyDownloads.org to offer free courses for download. It has 46,000 pages of course notes in Word and pdf, and over 146,000 English PowerPoint slides and 473,000 PowerPoint slides translated by 800 students into 54 languages, such as Albanian, Ao Naga, Arabic (122,000 slides), Bangla, Bisaya, Burmese, Chin Tedim, Chiru, Chinese, Czech, Dutch, English, French, German, Gujarati, Hindi, Ilonggo, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kachin, Karen, Khmer, Kiswahili, Korean, Liangmai, Lotha, Malay, Malayalam, Mao, Mizo, Mongolian, Moyon, Nepali, Nias, Norwegian, Paite Chin, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Rongmei, Russian, Sinhala, Spanish, Sumi Naga, Swedish, Tagalog, Tamil, Tangkhul, Tenyidie, Thai, Ukrainian, Vaiphei, and Vietnamese.

## Field

Jordan is 98% Muslim but promises freedom of religion and has diplomatic ties with Israel. Since its founding in 1991, JETS has trained half of the pastors of Jordan's 60 evangelical churches.

## Passion

Rick's passion is for God's leaders to preach and live the Word of God as God's servants:

- Teaching obedience to Christ's words is key to our commission to make disciples (Matt 28:20).
- Paul's legacy to Timothy focused on exposition: "Preach the Word" (2 Tim 4:2-3; cf. Acts 6:1-16).

However, recent trends include the following:

- Christians are biblically illiterate due to a "famine for hearing the words of the Lord" (Amos 8:11).
- Attempting to be "relevant," pastors preach what people want to hear, not what they need.

## Research Paper Grade Sheet

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Topic \_\_\_\_\_ Box \_\_\_\_\_

The first four sections below cover the paper's *content* (70% of the grade). The Form grade (the other 30%) is based on Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2018). Follow the seminary standards guide and the checklist on the following two pages.

	1 Poor	2 Minimal	3 Average	4 Good	5 Excellent
<b><u>Introduction</u></b>					
<b>Purpose</b> (descriptive title, paper addresses what issue?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Scope</b> of the issue defined/narrowed down	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Procedure</b> for addressing the issue introduced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b><u>Body</u></b>					
<b>Wide research</b> (other views included, good sources)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Individual work</b> (<20% quotes; careful citation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Key Bible texts</b> noted and addressed adequately	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Development</b> (proves points, not just lists the verses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Interpretation</b> of passages is accurate (exegesis)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b><u>Conclusion</u></b>					
<b>Solution</b> given to the issue raised in the introduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Main points</b> reviewed or restated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Length</b> (1/2 to 1 page, no unnecessary info.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b><u>Miscellaneous</u></b>					
(These can be addressed anywhere in the paper)					
<b>Application</b> (shows why the topic is important)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Depth &amp; Insight</b> (leaves any questions unanswered?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>The Internet</b> is not used for more than 20% of sources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b><u>Form</u></b>					
<b>Format</b> (Contents & title page, length, pages numbered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Spelling</b> and typographical errors, punctuation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Grammar</b> (agreement of subject/verb and tenses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Footnotes</b> ( <i>not</i> endnotes; proper form; biblio. included)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Logical</b> (not a collection of thoughts or repetitive)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sections</b> agree with the Contents page; no orphan headings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b><u>Summary</u></b>					
Number of ticks per column	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Multiplied by point values of the column	<b>x 1</b>	<b>x 2</b>	<b>x 3</b>	<b>x 4</b>	<b>x 5</b>
Equals the total point value for each column	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Net points _____ minus 3 points per day late (_____ points) equals % grade of _____%					
<b>Comments:</b>					

21<sup>st</sup> ed. (1 July 2025)



## Research Paper Checklist

\* Asterisks show the most common mistakes students make on research papers. Give special attention to these areas!

### 1. General Format

- 1.1 Obtain your own copy of the handout "Why Write Papers?" by Dr. Henry Baldwin.
- 1.2 The most complete and widely used format guide is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed. rev. by John Grossman and Alice Bennett (Chicago & London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1937, 1955, 1967, 1973, 1987, 1996). 308 pp.
- 1.3 Questions not answered by Turabian can probably found in *The Chicago Manual of Style*.
- 1.4 Staple the pages in the upper left corner rather than using report folders or attaching the paper at the top centre.

### 2. Preliminaries

- 2.1 The title page should follow the typical format in Turabian.
  - 2.1.1 Only "SINGAPORE BIBLE COLLEGE" and the TITLE should be in capital letters.
  - 2.1.2 Please include your mailbox number after your name.
  - 2.1.3 The same size type (and font) should be used throughout the paper.
- 2.2 The margins should not change (e.g., should not be in outline form) but should be 2.5 cm on all sides.
- 2.3\* Include a Table of Contents.
  - 2.3.1 The Contents page should include only the first page number of each section.
  - 2.3.2 Subtitles within the Contents page should be indented.
  - 2.3.3 Note this is called a "Table of Contents" and not a "Table of Content."
  - 2.3.4 "Table of Contents" should not be an entry on the Table of Contents.
- 2.4 Page numbers should be at the top right in the preliminaries (except no number on Title Page and Table of Contents) and at the bottom centre from the first page to the end.

### 3. Body & Style

- 3.1\* Provide an introduction that summarizes the problem(s) your paper aims to answer.
- 3.2\* Check your grammar for confusion of tense, plural, verb/noun, etc. (cf. section 9)
- 3.3 Use a spell checker if you have one on your computer to avoid careless spelling mistakes.
- 3.4 Double-space the paper throughout in prose form (not outline form).
- 3.5\* Write in the third person rather than the first person ("This author..." and not "I" or "we" or "us").
- 3.6 Follow these guidelines for headings within the text:
  - 3.6.1 Headings should match your Contents page.
  - 3.6.2 Headings should not have periods (full stops or colons) after them.
  - 3.6.3\* Headings should not be in outline form (no "I," "II," "A," "1," "a," "-", etc.).
  - 3.6.4 Avoid widow headings (at the bottom of a page without the first sentence of a paragraph).
  - 3.6.5 Don't repeat a heading on the next page even if it covers the same section of the paper.
  - 3.6.6 Each research paper should have at least 2-3 headings or divisions.
  - 3.6.7 As an exception to 3.6 above, in short papers (6-8 pages) which do not have chapters, (1) main headings should be centred capitals, followed by (2) subheadings which are underlined centred small letters, (3) underlined left column small letters, (4) non-underlined left column small letters, and finally (5) underlined small letters which begin an indented paragraph. If only two levels are needed then (2) above may be skipped.
- 3.7\* Do not clutter your paper with unnecessary details that do not contribute to your purpose.
- 3.8\* Make every statement a full sentence within the text (the exception is headings).
- 3.9 Critically evaluate your sources; do not believe a heresy just because it's in print!
- 3.10 Make sure your reasoning is solid and logical.
- 3.11\* Provide a conclusion which solves/summarizes the problem addressed in the introduction

### 4. Abbreviations

- 4.1\* Do not use abbreviations in the text or footnotes (except inside parentheses).
- 4.2 Cite from 1-3 verses inside parentheses in the text but 4 or more verses in the footnotes.
- 4.3\* Use proper biblical book abbreviations with a colon between chapter and verse.
- 4.4 Do not start sentences with an Arabic number. Write "First Kings 3:16..." (not "1 Kings 3:16...").
- 4.5 Write out numbers under ten in the text (e.g., "three"); abbreviate those over ten (e.g., "45").
- 4.6 "For example" (e.g.) and "that is to say" (i.e.) are abbreviated only within parentheses.

### 5. Quotations

- 5.1\* When quoting word-for-word use quotation marks and footnote the source. Do not plagiarise!
- 5.2 Use proper quotation formats with single quotation marks within double ones.
- 5.3 Use indented single-spaced block quotations (no quotation marks) when three or more lines.
- 5.4\* Avoid citing long texts of Scriptures or other sources so the paper mostly reflects your own thinking.
- 5.5 Provide biblical support for your position rather than simply citing your opinion.
- 5.6 If your source quotes a more original source, then quote the original in this manner: R. N. Soulen, *Handbook*, 18 (cited by Rick Griffith, *New Testament Backgrounds*, 7th ed. [SBC, 1999], 165).

## Research Paper Checklist (2 of 2)

## 6. Punctuation

- 6.1 Periods & commas go *before* quote marks and footnote numbers (e.g., "Marriage," not "Marriage".)
- 6.2 Periods & commas go *outside* parentheses (unless a complete sentence is within the parentheses). For example: "Jesus wept" (John 11:35), but never "Jesus wept." (John 11:35)
- 6.3 A space should not precede a period, comma, final parenthesis, semicolon, apostrophe or colon.
- 6.4 A space should not follow a beginning parenthesis or beginning quotation mark.
- 6.7 A space should always follow a comma and two spaces always follow a period.

## 7. Footnotes

- 7.1\* The first reference to a book includes (in this order) the author's *given* name first then family name, title (in *italics* or underlined but not in quotes), publication data in parentheses (place, colon, publisher, comma, then year), volume (if more than one), and page number. For example: Ralph Gower, *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times* (Chicago: Moody, 1987), 233. Notice that in footnotes a full stop (period) is used only *once* at the end of the citation. Indent the first line of each footnote entry.
- 7.2\* Cite later references to the same book but a different page number with only the author's family name (not given name) and new page number. For example: Gower, 166.
- 7.3 If the next citation has the same book and same page number, then type "Ibid." (Latin abbreviation for "in the same place"). For example: Ibid. However, if a different page number is referred to, then "Ibid." should be followed by a period and comma. For example: Ibid., 64.
- 7.4 If the next citation is by the same author but a different work, type "Idem" (Latin abbreviation for "by the same author") before the new book. For example: Idem, *Marriage and Family*, 221.
- 7.5\* Encyclopedia, Bible dictionary, or other books with multiple authors under an editor should first cite the article's author, then article title within quotes, book, editor, publication data in parentheses, volume, and page. For example: P. Trutza, "Marriage," *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 5 vols., ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975, 1976), 4:92-102. (If needed, look up the author's name after the Contents page by tracing the initials at the end of the article.)
- 7.6 Footnote numbers are raised with no parentheses and go *after* a quotation's punctuation (e.g., period).
- 7.7 Always cite your footnote numbers in sequence rather than using a former number again.
- 7.8 Use only numbers as footnote references (don't use letters or \*#@^% etc.).
- 7.9 Cite translations in parentheses within the text rather than the footnotes—for example, "trust" (NIV).
- 7.10 Cite book, chapter, and paragraphs of primary (ancient) sources with Arabic numerals and full stops (e.g., "Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 18.1.3," not "Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, Book XVIII, Chapter 1, Section 3").
- 7.11 Page numbers may be added to primary sources in parentheses. For example: *War* 2.1 (Whiston, 44).

## 8. Bibliography

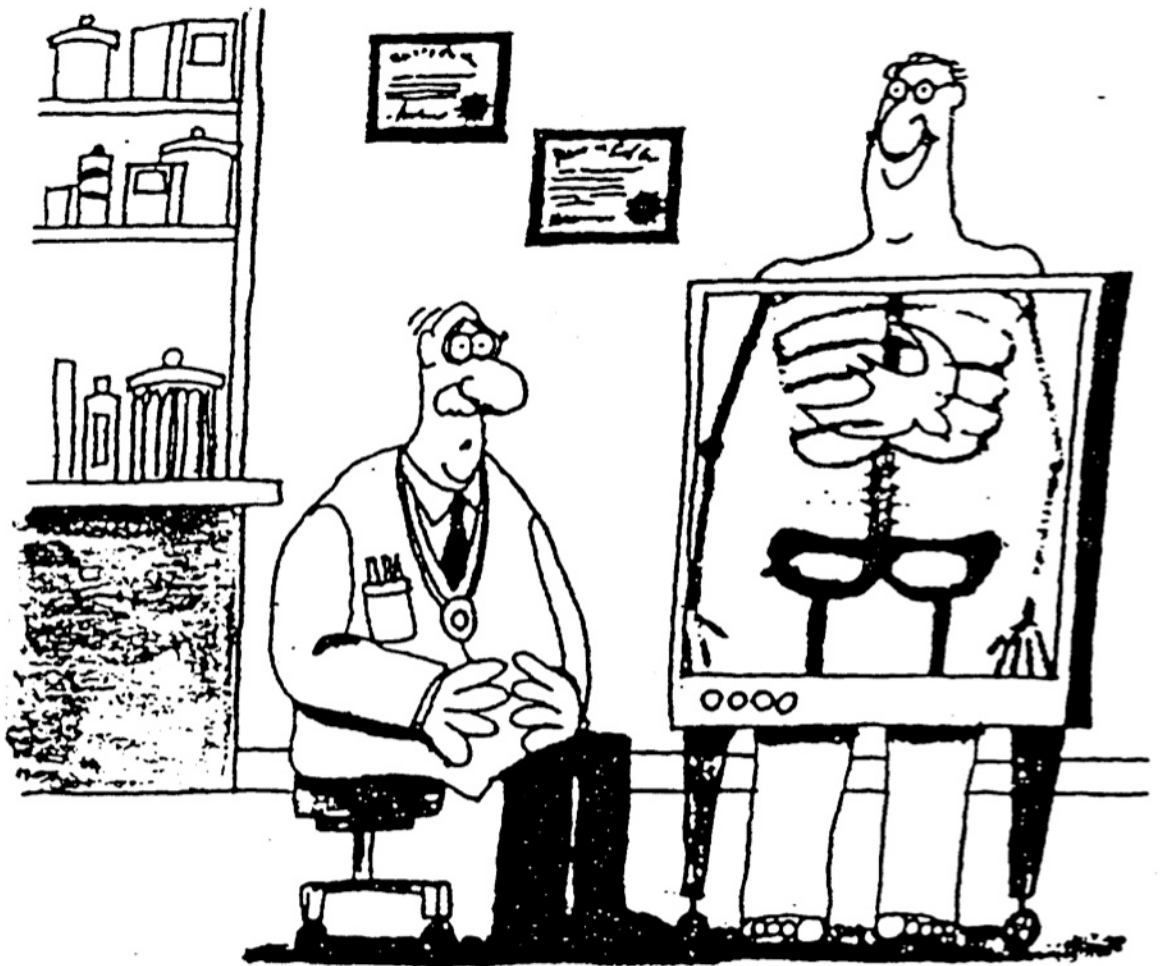
- 8.1 Alphabetize all sources by family name without numbering the sources.
- 8.2 Make entries single-spaced with the second line indented and with a double space between entries.
- 8.3 Do not cite an author's title in a footnote or the bibliography (no "Dr.," "Rev." etc.).
- 8.4 Cite book references differently than in the footnotes by including the author's *family* name first (not given name), title (in *italics* or underlined but not in quotes), publication data *without* parentheses (place, colon, publisher, comma, then year), and volume (if more than one). For example: Gower, Ralph. *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*. Chicago: Moody, 1987. Use full stops (not commas) after each first name, title, and date; don't use parentheses (but do use them in footnotes). Indent each line after the first line in an entry.
- 8.5\* Encyclopedia, Bible dictionary, or other books with multiple authors under an editor should first cite the article's author, then article title within quotes, book, editor, publication data, volume, and page. Cite these articles as follows: Trutza, P., "Marriage," *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Ed. Merrill C. Tenney. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975, 1976. 4:92-102. (You may need to find the author's name after the Contents page by tracing the initials at the end of the article.)
- 8.6 Put the bibliography on a separate page rather than tagging it on to the conclusion.
- 8.7 Consult as many sources as you have pages in your paper (e.g., 8 sources for an 8-page paper).
- 8.8\* Include the bibliography even if the lecturer has assigned the sources.
- 8.9 Primary sources should be listed under the ancient author's name, followed by the translator's name. For example: Josephus. *The Works of Josephus*. Translated by William Whiston...
- 8.10 Primary sources with several or unknown authors should be listed by editor and/or translator's name. For example: Danby, Herbert, trans. *The Mishnah*. Oxford: University, 1933.

## 9. Common Grammatical and Spelling Mistakes

- 9.1 "Respond" (verb) is used for "response" (noun). "The respond" should be "The response."
- 9.2\* Events in biblical times should be noted in the past tense.
- 9.3 Write "BC" dates *before* "BC" but "AD" dates *after* "AD" ("AD 70" and "70 BC" but never as "70 AD" or "BC 70").
- 9.4 Always capitalize the words "Christian," "Bible," "Christ," "Word of God," and "Scripture(s)."
- 9.5 The current trend is to *avoid* capitalization, especially in the adjectives "biblical," "scriptural," etc.
- 9.6 Avoid words in all CAPITALS in the text (except acronyms and 3.6.7).

# Pneumatology

The Study of the Holy Spirit



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## What Do You Think of the Holy Spirit?

Please circle one of these three responses to each of the following questions:  
(A) Agree, (U) Unsure, or (D) Disagree.

### Control

1. A U D The Spirit puts thoughts into our minds.
2. A U D The Spirit removes thoughts from our minds.
3. A U D The Spirit will never override people's bodily movements against their will.
4. A U D The Spirit does not cause us to do things that result in division in a local church (Eph. 4:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:13).
5. A U D The Spirit always works in our lives in what we consider to be an orderly manner (John 3:8 "wind goes where it will"; Acts 8:39).

### Prayer

6. A U D I have a personal relationship with the Spirit (John 14:16-17).
7. A U D It's alright to pray to the Holy Spirit (as well as to the Father).
8. A U D It's alright to pray to Jesus Christ (as well as to the Father).

### Manifestations

9. A U D The Spirit sometimes uses our own psychological manifestations which we think are from Him (e.g., one thinking he has the gift of tongues when he really doesn't).
10. A U D The Spirit sometimes works in our lives in ways which are not mentioned in the Bible (non-biblical, though not anti-biblical). See 1 Cor. 2:10.

### Filling

11. A U D We cannot sin when we are filled with the Spirit.
12. A U D Every Christian has, at some time, been filled with the Spirit (e.g., at salvation).
13. A U D We should pray to be filled with the Spirit.
14. A U D Mature believers are filled with the Spirit.
15. A U D Those filled with the Spirit are mature believers.

### Tongues

16. A U D I was baptized in the Holy Spirit after my conversion (I had a "second blessing").
17. A U D I have spoken in tongues in the biblical way (exercised the biblical gift of tongues).
18. A U D I have had a glossalalia experience (ecstatic speech which was not real tongues).
19. A U D The biblical gift of tongues must be in a foreign language unknown to the speaker.
20. A U D The gift of tongues is being distributed by the Spirit today.

### Prophecy

21. A U D Biblical prophecy is always inerrant (i.e., true prophecy never has errors).
22. A U D Prophecy can be exercised by any Christian.
23. A U D Some NT prophecy is less authoritative than OT prophecy.
24. A U D Some spiritual gifts have ceased.

## The Personality of the Spirit

### Importance

Why must we believe that the Holy Spirit is a person? What follows logically if He is a “fluid” (Mormons) or an influence or “force” (Jehovah’s Witnesses and New Age)?

### Evidence for the Personality of the Spirit

Many people have labeled the twentieth century as the century of the Holy Spirit. The rise and spread of Pentecostalism with its major emphasis on the ministries of the Spirit and the blossoming of dispensationalism’s emphasis on works of the Spirit are distinctive to this age. Too the century’s concern for the evangelization of the world highlighted a need to know the power of the Spirit to accomplish this. Though this attention on the work of the Spirit has been a good thing, it has not always been scripturally guided; thus there exists an even greater need today for careful attention to the biblical teaching on this subject.

#### I. HE IS A PERSON

Denial that the Spirit is a Person often takes the form of substituting the concept that He is a personification of, say, power—much like claiming that Satan is a personification of evil. This denial of His personality has occurred throughout church history, first by the Monarchians, the Arians, the Socinians and today by Unitarians, liberals, and some neoorthodox theologians.

##### A. He Possesses and Exhibits the Attributes of a Person

1. *He has intelligence.* He knows and searches the things of God (1 Cor. 2:10-11); He possesses a mind (Rom. 8:27); and He is able to teach people (1 Cor. 2:13).
2. *He shows feelings.* He can be grieved by the sinful actions of believers (Eph. 4:30—*an influence cannot be grieved*).
3. *He has a will.* He uses this in distributing gifts to the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:11). He also directs the activities of Christians (Acts 16:6-11).

Since genuine personality possesses intelligence, feelings, and will, and since the Spirit has these attributes, He must be a Person.

##### B. He Exhibits the Actions of a Person

1. *He guides us into truth by hearing, speaking, and showing* (John 16:13).
2. *He convicts of sin* (John 16:8).
3. *He performs miracles* (Acts 8:39).
4. *He intercedes* (Rom. 8:26).

These are activities which an influence or personification could not do but which Scripture shows the Holy Spirit can do.

##### C. He Receives Ascriptions Which Would Be Given Only to a Person

1. *He is One to be obeyed* (Acts 10:19-21).
2. *He can be lied to* (Acts 5:3).
3. *He can be resisted* (Acts 7:51).
4. *He can be grieved* (Eph. 4:30).
5. *He can be blasphemed* (Matt. 12:31).
6. *He can be insulted* (Heb. 10:29).

To think of acting and reacting to an influence in these ways is incongruous.

##### D. He Relates as a Person to Other Persons

1. *To the apostles.* He relates to the apostles in a manner which shows His own distinct personality (Acts 15:28). He is a Person as they are persons; yet He is a distinct and identifiable Person.
2. *To Jesus.* He relates to the Lord Jesus in such a way that if the Lord has personality one must conclude that the Spirit does also. Yet He is distinct from Christ (John 16:14).
3. *To other Trinity members.* He relates to the other Persons of the Trinity as an equal Person (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14).
4. *To His own power.* The Spirit is related to His own power yet distinguished from it so that we may not conclude that He is merely a personification of power (Luke 4:14; Acts 10:38; 1 Cor. 2:4).

##### E. A Grammatical Consideration

Several times the writers of the New Testament will use a masculine pronoun to refer to the Spirit (which is a neuter). The clearest example of this exception to normal grammatical usage is John 16:13-14 where the masculine demonstrative pronoun is used twice to refer to the Spirit mentioned in verse 13. Other references are less clear since the masculine pronouns used may refer to the word “Paraclete” (which is masculine, 15:26; 16:7-8) or to the word “earnest” (which is also masculine, Eph. 1:14-15, κῆν). Nevertheless, the clear exception to normal accordance in John 16:13-14 does support the true personality of the Spirit.

Each of these lines of scriptural evidence leads to the conclusion that the Holy Spirit, even though a spirit being, is as real a Person as the Father, or the Son, or as we are.

Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 343-44

# Biblical Evidence for the Doctrine of the Trinity

(Adapted from Dr. R. Walter Martin; cf. Colossians notes, 194-99)

## Introduction

"Many people think that the Trinity is impossible to understand, that it is a logical and conceptual impossibility. The cults vehemently deny the Trinity, asserting that it is a doctrine of Satan. The non-Christian religions make sport of the doctrine, saying that Christians believe in three gods.

"But it is possible to understand the Trinity. We may not have exhaustive knowledge of the doctrine. But we can know it enough to state it clearly and understand it deeply...."<sup>1</sup>

## How to Prove the Trinity

1. Begin the investigation into Scripture by starting from scratch, assuming nothing.
2. Demonstrate that the Bible teaches that only one God exists (Isa. 44:6; 1 Tim. 2:5<sup>2</sup>).
3. Correctly define the Trinity: "Within the nature of the one, true God exists three Person(age)s: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who share the same attributes, are the same substance (nature, essence or reality) and are in effect the one, true God."
4. Decide if Jesus is a lunatic (one who made false claims unknowingly), a liar (one who made false claims knowingly), or who he said he was (one who spoke the truth).<sup>3</sup> Assuming Christ spoke only the truth, we must believe what he says. This is recorded in the Bible, so may we use only the Bible as our only authoritative source concerning this doctrine?
5. Show the person the reasonableness of this proposition: If three biblical Persons are all called God and share the same attributes of God, but there exists only one God, they are, in effect, *the* one, true God. (If this can be demonstrated, then the Trinity is true.)
6. The Bible conclusively proves the above proposition in the following passages that identify the same attributes/titles with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit:

<b>Attribute/Title</b>	<b>Father</b>	<b>Son</b>	<b>Holy Spirit</b>
Called "God" (deity)	<u>2 Pet. 1:17</u> <sup>4</sup>	Heb. 1:6-8 <sup>5</sup>	<u>Acts 5:3-4</u> <sup>6</sup>
Worshipped as God	<u>Matt. 4:10</u> <sup>7</sup>	<u>John 20:28</u> <sup>8</sup>	None <sup>9</sup>
Indwells believers	<u>1 Cor 3:16a</u> <sup>10</sup>	<u>Col. 1:27</u> <sup>11</sup>	<u>1 Cor 3:16b</u> <sup>12</sup>
Is the truth	<u>John 3:33</u> <sup>13</sup>	<u>John 14:6</u> <sup>14</sup>	<u>1 John 5:6</u> <sup>15</sup>
Raised Christ	<u>Acts 3:26</u> <sup>16</sup>	<u>John 10:17</u> <sup>17</sup>	<u>Rom. 8:11</u> <sup>18</sup>
Omniscient (all-knowing)	Ps. 139:1-5 <sup>19</sup>	<u>John 16:3</u> <sup>20</sup>	<u>1 Cor 2:10-11</u> <sup>21</sup>
Omnipotent (all-powerful)	Matt. 19:26 <sup>22</sup>	Phil. 4:13 <sup>23</sup>	<u>Zech. 4:6</u> <sup>24</sup>
Omnipresent (everywhere)	Jer. 23:24 <sup>25</sup>	Matt. 18:20 <sup>26</sup>	Ps. 139:7-12 <sup>27</sup>
Has personhood	John 3:16 <sup>28</sup>	John 1:9-18 <sup>29</sup>	John 14:17 <sup>30</sup>
Helper ( <i>Paraclete</i> )	2 Cor 1:3-6	1 John 2:1	John 14:26 <sup>31</sup>
Forgives sin	Isa. 45:25 <sup>32</sup>	1 John 2:12 <sup>33</sup>	
Forgets sin	Jer. 31:34 <sup>34</sup>	Heb. 8:12	Heb. 10:17 <sup>35</sup>
Immutable (changeless)	Mal. 3:6 <sup>36</sup>	Heb. 13:8 <sup>37</sup>	
Eternal	Exod. 15:18 <sup>38</sup>	John 1:1-2 <sup>39</sup>	
"I Am"	Exod. 3:14	John 8:58 <sup>40</sup>	
"Alpha and Omega"	<u>Rev. 1:8</u>	<u>Rev. 22:13, 16</u>	
"First and the Last"	<u>Isa. 44:6</u>	<u>Rev. 1:17</u>	
Holy	Isa. 6:3 <sup>41</sup>	Mark 1:24 <sup>42</sup>	Luke 11:13

Note: Underlined verses are translated correctly in the Jehovah's Witness *New World Translation*.

7. Additional evidence from both the Old and New Testament reaffirms the verses on the preceding chart to support the doctrine of the Trinity:

### a. Old Testament Evidence:

- 1) The title *Elohim* ("God") always appears in the plural (2570 times!), thus supporting the teaching of Scripture elsewhere that God is more than one Personage (Gen. 1:1ff.).

- 2) Plural personal pronouns (“Us” rather than “Me”) are used for God (Gen. 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; Isa. 6:8).
- 3) The three Persons of the Trinity appear together in the same passage as distinct from one another (Isa. 48:16; 59:20-21; 63:7-10).
- 4) Distinctions within the nature of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are evident in:
  - a) Immanuel (Messiah) means “God with us” (Isa. 7:14).
  - b) The Son is called “the mighty God” (Isa. 9:6).
  - c) The Father delegates sovereign authority to the Son (Ps. 2:7).
  - d) The Father sent the Holy Spirit (Ps. 104:30).
  - e) One LORD is distinguished from the LORD (Gen. 19:24; Hos. 1:7).
  - f) The Spirit of the Lord (Holy Spirit) is distinct from the Father and Son (Isa. 48:16).
  - g) The Redeemer (who must be divine) is distinguished from the LORD (Isa. 59:20).
  - h) The Father sent the Angel of Jehovah, or pre-incarnate Christ, who is called God yet distinguished from Him (Gen. 16:7-13; 18:1-21; 19:1-28; 32:30; Mal. 3:1).
- b) New Testament Evidence:
  - 1) Jesus Christ is called the God incarnate (John 1:14) and the Son of **God** (Matt. 16:16) but He was conceived by the **Holy Spirit** (Matt. 1:18, 20); however, He is never called “the Son of the Holy Spirit.” Therefore, the Spirit must be God since God conceived Mary to produce the Son of God!
  - 2) The three Persons of the Trinity are distinguished at the baptism of Christ, where the Father spoke from heaven and the Holy Spirit descended as a dove (Matt. 3:16-17).
  - 3) The Father and the Comforter (Holy Spirit) are distinguished from Christ Himself (John 14:16-17).
  - 4) The Great Commission command to baptize “in the name (singular) of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” breaks the rules of grammar by using a singular noun (“name”) with three (i.e., a plural number of) genitives (Matt. 28:19). Again, in this trinitarian prescription for baptism, the three Persons are distinguished.
  - 5) Many other passages distinguish between the Persons in the Godhead by listing all three in the same passage (John 3:21-24; 4:2-31; 15:26; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor 12:3-6; 2 Cor 1:21; 13:14; Eph. 1:17; 2:13-22; 3:14-19; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; Jude 20-21; Rev. 1:4-5).

### Misunderstandings of the Trinity

1. Tritheism: three persons who are three gods
2. Modalism: one person who manifests himself in three different ways
3. Unitarianism: one person who is the only God
4. Nonsense: one person who is at the same time three persons



# Denials of the Doctrine

Search Ministries, Dallas, Texas

The doctrine of the Trinity is clearly taught in the Scriptures and it was emphatically affirmed in church history from the earliest period to present. Yet the major cults of America deny the truth of the trinity.

## I. The Mormons reject the Trinity.

- A. Their view of the Father: God the Father is the resurrected Adam. He was once a man but he became a finite god who is now populating the earth with his many celestial wives.
- B. Their view of the Son: Christ is an ordinary man who became a god. He was not produced by a direct act of the Holy Spirit but by actual sexual relations between God the Father (Adam-god) and Mary.
- C. Their world view: Polytheistic. They believe that many gods inhabit the universe and that man may become a god.

## II. The Jehovah's Witnesses reject the Trinity.

- A. Their view of the Father: Jehovah is the <sup>most</sup> high god.
- B. Their view of the Son: Jesus is "god-like" but not Jehovah. Prior to his earthly life he was Michael the Archangel. At his incarnation he became a man. At the resurrection Jesus went back to his former state as an invisible spirit body.
- C. Their view of the Spirit: "So the holy spirit is the invisible active force of Almighty God which moves his servants to do his will" (Let God be True, pg. 108). Thus, the deity and the personality of the Holy Spirit are both denied.
- D. Their view of the Trinity: "The trinity doctrine was not conceived by Jesus or the early Christians (ibid. 1952, pg.93). "The plain truth is that this is another of Satan's attempts to keep the God-fearing person from learning the truth of Jehovah and His Son Christ Jesus" (ibid 93).
- E. Their world view: Jehovah's Witnesses are monotheistic: There is one God who is strictly one person.

## III. The Unity School of Christianity rejects the Trinity.

- A. Their view of the Father: God is an impersonal force or a principle. "God exercises none of his attributes except through the inner consciousnesses of the universe and man" (Jesus Christ Heals, Unity Sch. of Christianity, 1944, pp. 31-32).
- B. Their view of the Son: Jesus of Nazareth was a man. The Christ principle is god or the impersonal force of the universe which resides in all mankind. Jesus of Nazareth allowed the Christ principle to so totally control him that he was elevated to Jesus Christ.
- C. Their view of the trinity: "The Father is a principle, the Son is that Principle revealed in creative plan, the Holy Spirit is the executive power of both the Father and the Son carrying out that plan" (Metaphysical Bible Dict., pg. 629).
- D. Their world view: Pantheistic. God is an impersonal force. Everything that exists is God and God is all that exists.

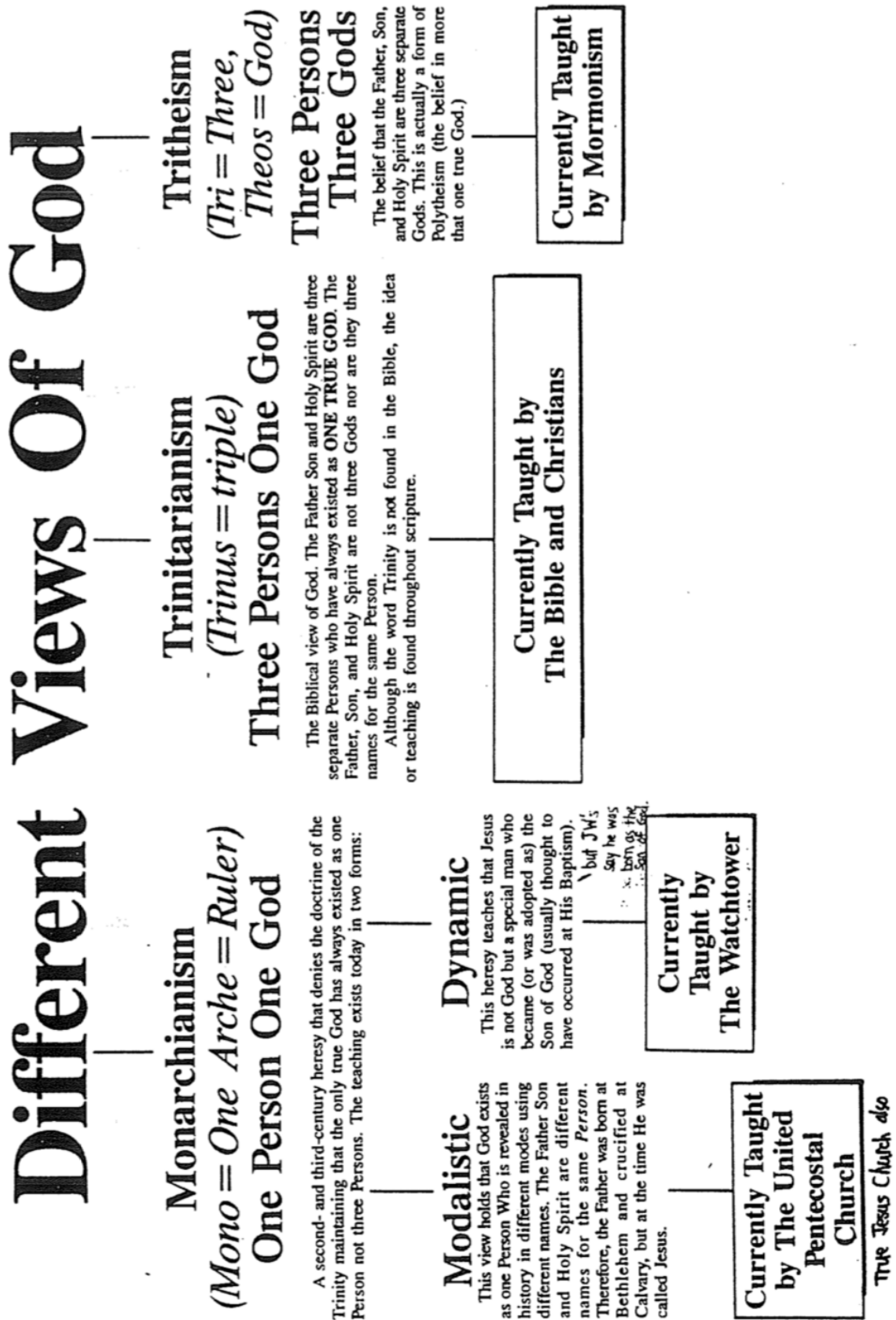
## IV. The Christian Scientists reject the Trinity.

- A. Their view of the Father: Mary Baker Eddy denied that the God of Christian Science was pantheistic (meaning that god was to be identified with the whole material world). But when she describes God she depicts him as "the divine whole, an all pervading intelligence and love, a divine infinite principle" (Misc. Writings, p. 16). He is not an infinite personal God. He is a divine principle.
- B. Their view of the Son: Christ is a divine idea, or principle. Jesus is the human man who lived in history. Jesus the man more than any other man manifested the Christ principle and thus became Jesus Christ.
- C. Their world view: Christian Science is pantheistic. God is the world and the world is God.

In conversations with members of Cults the Trinity is the place to begin. Probe with two kinds of questions. Who was Jesus Christ? And what is Christ's relationship to the Father and the Spirit? Initially answers from cultists will sound orthodox. But as you ask questions and define terms you will quickly find a radical difference in their Christ and the person who is revealed in the Gospels.

# Different Views of God Diagrammed

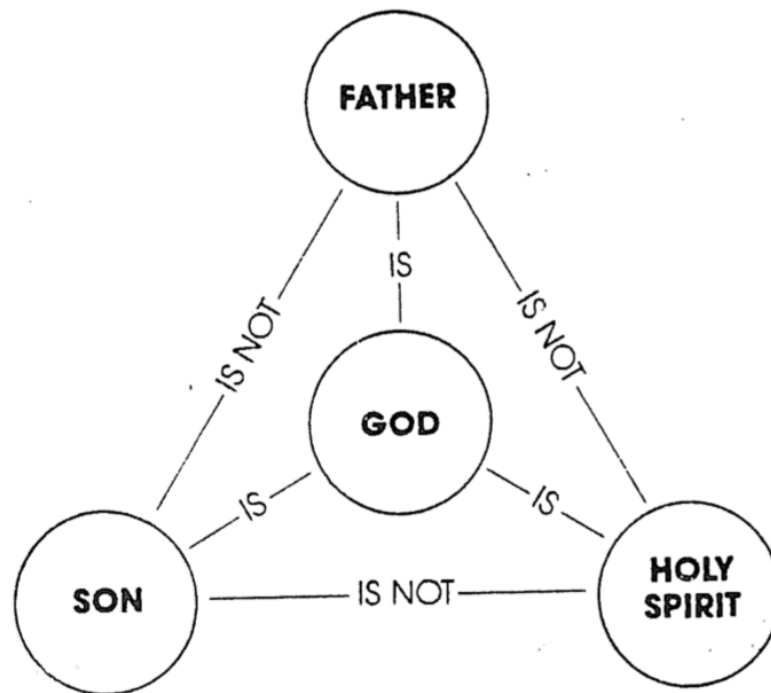
(Search Ministries)



## Illustrations of the Trinity

No illustration of the Trinity can be adequate, but the following illustrations depict some of its aspects:

1. The triple point of water: Water in a vacuum tube at zero degrees centigrade will contain liquid, ice, and vapor, yet each part will still be H<sub>2</sub>O, the same substance.
2. An Egg: An egg comprises three parts: the white, yolk, and shell. However, it is one egg.  
Problem: Illustrates “parts” of God which are unscriptural
3. The Sun: The Sun is unapproachable (the Father) but is the source of beneficial light (the Son), which in turn gives power to make plants grow (the Spirit).  
Problem: Impersonal illustration, whereas God is a personal being
4. A Man: A man can simultaneously be a father, son, and husband, although he is but one man.  
Problem: Approaches modalism since it indicates three different functions for one man.
5. A Diagram: Here is the best Trinity diagram that I have seen (Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 55):



## Conclusion

“A popular statement about the Trinity goes like this, ‘Try to understand the Trinity, and you will lose your mind, but fail to understand the Trinity, and you will lose your soul.’ This betrays a misunderstanding of the doctrine. The Trinity is not a logical contradiction. For God to be three persons, yet one essence, is logically possible. We do know the what of the Trinity: God is three persons but one essence. But the how of the Trinity—the exhaustive knowledge of how the persons of the Trinity relate to one another—that is a mystery. It is what we can know, coupled with what we cannot know, that compels us to worship such a great God.”<sup>43</sup>

## Trinity Study Endnotes

Note: Underlined verses are translated correctly in the Jehovah's Witness *New World Translation*. Those with double underlines are particularly clear even in this distorted version of the Bible.

- 1 "The Trinity." An unpublished study outline by Search Ministries, Dallas, TX.
- 2 Deut. 4:39b; Isa. 43:10; 44:8; 45:22; Mark 12:29; Gal. 3:20; Eph. 4:5-6; Jas. 2:19; 1 Cor 8:4-6.
- 3 For a full explanation of the "Liar, Lunatic, Lord" apologetic, see Josh McDowell's *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, 1979), 103-107.
- 4 1 Cor 1:3; Eph. 6:23; Phil. 1:12; 2:10; Col. 3:17.
- 5 Matt. 1:23; 4:6-7; Mark 2:1-12; John 1:1, 14; 5:18; 10:30; 12:44-45; 14:9-11; 15:23; 17:11, 21; 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:8-11; Col. 1:15-19; 2:9; Tit 2:13; Heb. 1:1-4; 2 Pet. 1:1; 1 John 5:20; Rev. 1:8 with 1:17-18.
- 6 Matt. 1:18 with 16:16; 2 Cor 3:17.
- 7 Exod. 20:3-5.
- 8 Matt. 2:2, 8, 11; 28:17; Heb. 1:6.
- 9 No explicit NT text (that I know of) encourages us to worship the Spirit or pray to Him.
- 10 2 Cor 6:16.
- 11 Rom. 8:10.
- 12 John 14:17; 1 Cor 6:19.
- 13 John 7:28; 8:26.
- 14 John 1:14; 8:32 with 8:36.
- 15 John 15:26; 16:13.
- 16 1 Thess. 1:10; Col. 2:12.
- 17 John 2:19-21.
- 18 Acts 17:31.
- 19 Matt. 10:29-30.
- 20 Col. 2:3; Heb. 4:13; Rev. 2:23.
- 21 Isa. 11:2.
- 22 Gen. 18:14; Job 42:4; Jer. 32:17; Zech. 8:6; Mark 10:27; Lk 1:37; 18:27.
- 23 Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3.
- 24 Perhaps also 1 Cor 12:13.
- 25 Job 22:12-14; Eph. 4:6.
- 26 Matt. 28:20; Col. 1:27.
- 27 John 14:17.
- 28 Matt. 6:9-13.
- 29 Phil. 2:6-8.
- 30 The Holy Spirit is not a "vapor" or a "divine influence." Only a person is referred to by the personal pronoun "He" (John 16:8), and only a person can be quoted (Acts 13:2).
- 31 Mark 2:7; Ps. 103:3a, 12; Isa. 1:18; 44:22; 53:5; Jer. 31:34.
- 32 Mark 2:1-11; Acts 10:43; 13:38.
- 33 John 15:26.
- 34 Isa. 43:25.
- 35 The Father's words (Jer. 31:34) are attributed to the Son (Heb. 8:12) and Spirit (Heb. 10:17). The author could not exercise this freedom unless all three are one.
- 36 James 1:17.
- 37 Heb. 1:12.
- 38 Ps. 41:13; Rev. 1:8.
- 39 Col. 1:15; Rev. 22:13.
- 40 John's seven "I am" statements are 6:35; 8:12; 8:58; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1.
- 41 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Rev. 4:8; 15:4
- 42 Parallel in Luke 4:34; cf. Luke 1:35; John 6:69; Acts 2:27; 13:35; Rev. 3:7.
- 43 "The Trinity." An unpublished study outline by Search Ministries, Dallas, TX.

## The Spirit in Relationships

Adapted from Charles Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 2d ed.

### I. The Holy Spirit in Relation to Creation

- A. Notice how the creative work of the Holy Spirit soon became a ministry of providence.

<i>Work of Creating</i>	<i>Work of Sustaining</i>
Created the world (Gen. 1:2, 26 "Elohim" & "us")	Does not create but only sustains (Ps. 104:30)
Created man directly (Job 33:4)	People come from their parents (Gen. 5:1-3' Matt. 1;1-17)

- B. Question: How do the above contrasts relate to a theology of rest?

Answer: God (Father, Son, and Spirit) presently rests from His creative work but not from His sustaining work (cf. John 5:17).

### II. The Holy Spirit in Relation to Man

- A. "Holy Spirit" appears only 3 times in the OT, and, although very active, he is mostly in the NT. Note this contrast of the work of the Spirit in the Old and New Testaments as He relates to man:

Old Testament	New Testament
Indwelt only some men of God, such as Joshua (Num. 27:18; cf. the testimonies of pagan kings in Gen. 41:38; Dan. 4:8; 5:11-14)	Indwells all believers in Christ (1 Cor. 12:13)
Came on persons (Judg. 3:10)	Comes in persons (1 Cor. 6:19)
Temporary indwelling: Samson (Judg. 13:10 vs. 16:20), Saul (1 Sam. 10:10 vs. 16:14)	Permanent indwelling (John 14:16)
Enabling or gifting limited to some people (Exod. 31:3)	Enabling or gifting unlimited (Eph. 1:3) as it is for all believers (1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 18)
No baptism by the Spirit existed (Acts 1:5; John 7:37-39)	Baptism by the Spirit applies to all Christians (1 Cor. 12:13)
Filling of the Spirit for individuals (especially unlikely ones)	Filling of the Spirit for the entire body (Eph. 5:18)
Filling of the Spirit for leaders only for national good	Filling of the Spirit for leaders and followers for corporate good of the church
Filling of the Spirit for Jews only	Filling of the Spirit for Jews and Gentiles

- B. Question: How do these contrasts affect our interpretation of OT Scripture (e.g., Ps. 51:11)?

Answer: OT prayers such as "do not take your Spirit away from me" (Ps. 51:11) are inappropriate today due to the new ministries of the Spirit.

### III. The Holy Spirit in Relation to Revelation and Inspiration

	Revelation	Inspiration
<b>Definition</b>	"The disclosure of that which was previously unknown" (Ryrie, <i>The Holy Spirit</i> , 2d ed., 41)	"God's superintending human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error His message to man in the words of their original writings in the Bible" (Ryrie, <i>The Holy Spirit</i> , 2d ed., 42)
<b>Meaning</b>	"Unveiled, disclosed"	"God breathed"
<b>Concerns</b>	Material (the content God shows)	Method (how the material was recorded)
<b>Scope</b>	Bible, prophecies, nature, Christ (not all revelation is in the Bible)	Bible

### IV. The Holy Spirit in Relation to Jesus Christ

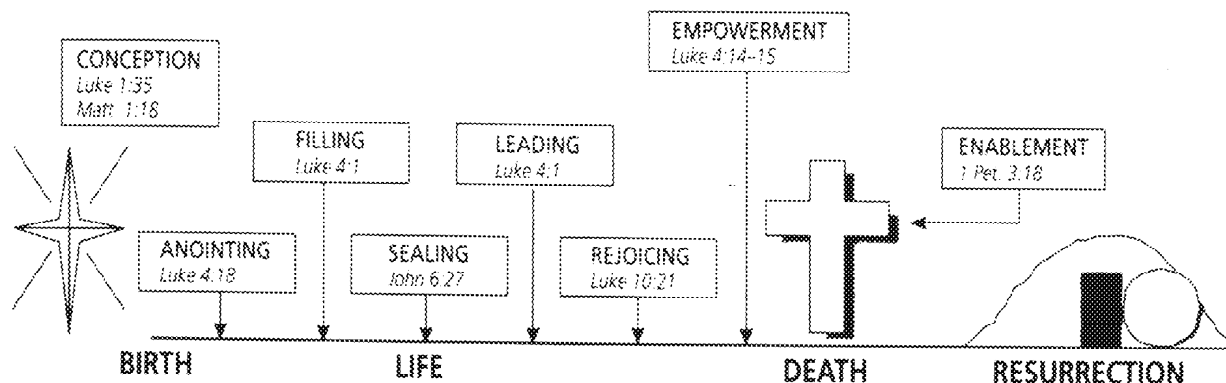
#### A. Birth of Christ

1. Scripture clearly teaches that Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:35).
2. But why must this be so?
  - a. He had to be born as the Son of God, thus becoming the God-man who could bear man's sin.
  - b. He had to be born without a sinful nature.
    - 1) Problem: But how could this be since his mother was a sinner? Even if Jesus didn't receive a sinful nature from an earthly father, wouldn't an earthly mother such as Mary pass this on to Him?
    - 2) No. Each of us receives our sinful nature not from our mother but from our father. Romans 5:12-19 notes that Adam's sin was passed to the future generations, not Eve's (even though she was the first mother of creation).

#### B. Life of Christ

1. Anointed for ministry by the Spirit (Luke 4:18; Acts 4:27; 10:38; Heb. 1:9)
2. Filled with the Spirit (Luke 4:1)
3. Sealed with the Spirit (John 6:27)
4. Led by the Spirit (Luke 4:1)
5. Rejoiced in the Spirit (Luke 10:21)
6. Empowered by the Spirit (Matt. 12:28; Luke 4:14-15, 18)
7. Sustained in death (Heb. 9:14; cf. Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 48-49)
8. Raised by Spirit? (Rom. 1:4?; 8:11?; 1 Pet. 3:18?)

## THE SAVIOR AND THE SPIRIT



SOURCE: Professor Manfred E. Kober, Faith Baptist College and Theological Seminary, Ankeny, Iowa 50021. Used by Permission.

Charles Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 2d ed., 66

### V. The Holy Spirit in Relation to Prayer

#### A. Glory of Christ and Worship of the Spirit

1. Question: Should we worship the Holy Spirit? Or would this detract from the glory due to Jesus Christ?
2. What are the implications if we can worship the Spirit or if we cannot?
3. Support: Some groups encourage worship of the Spirit.
  - a. The Westminster Confession of Faith (AD 1643-1646) encourages worship of the third person of the Trinity:

#### CHAPTER 21: OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP, AND THE SABBATH-DAY

2. Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and to him alone; not to angels, saints, or any other creature: and, since the fall, not without a Mediator; nor in the mediation of any other but of Christ alone.
3. Prayer, with thanksgiving, being one special part of religious worship, is by God required of all men: and, that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the name of the Son, by the help of his Spirit, according to his will, with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance; and, if vocal, in a known tongue.

- b. J. I. Packer says, "Is it proper to pray to the Spirit? There is no example of doing this anywhere in Scripture, but since the Spirit is God, it cannot be wrong to invoke and address him if there is good reason to do so" (*Keep in Step With the Spirit* [Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, 1984], p. 261).



- c. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 380-81, also encourages prayer to the Spirit:

**4. Should We Pray to Jesus and to the Holy Spirit?** A survey of the prayers of the New Testament indicates that they are usually addressed neither to God the Son nor to the Holy Spirit, but to God the Father. Yet a mere count of such prayers may be misleading, for the majority of the prayers we have recorded in the New Testament are those of Jesus himself, who constantly prayed to God the Father, but of course did not pray to himself as God the Son. Moreover, in the Old Testament, the trinitarian nature of God was not so clearly revealed, and it is not surprising that we do not find much evidence of prayer addressed directly to God the Son or God the Holy Spirit before the time of Christ.

Though there is a clear pattern of prayer directly to God the Father through the Son (Matt. 6:9; John 16:23; Eph. 5:20) there are indications that prayer spoken directly to Jesus is also appropriate. The fact that it was Jesus himself who appointed all of the other apostles, suggests that the prayer in Acts 1:24 is addressed to him: "Lord, who knows the hearts of all men, show which one of these two you have chosen...." The dying Stephen prays, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). The conversation between Ananias and "the Lord" in Acts 9:10-16 is with Jesus, because in verse 17 Ananias tells Saul, "The Lord Jesus...has sent me that you may regain your sight." The prayer, "Our Lord, come!" (1 Cor. 16:22) is addressed to Jesus, as is the prayer in Revelation 22:20, "Come, Lord Jesus!" And Paul also prayed to "the Lord" in 2 Corinthians 12:8 concerning his thorn in the flesh. [Footnote: The name *Lord* (Gk. *kyrios*) is used in Acts and the Epistles primarily to refer to the Lord Jesus Christ.]

Moreover, the fact that Jesus is "a merciful and faithful high priest" (Heb. 2:17) who is able to "sympathize with our weaknesses" (Heb. 4:15), is viewed as an encouragement to us to come boldly before the "throne of grace" in prayer "that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). These verses must give us encouragement to come directly to Jesus in prayer, expecting that he will sympathize with our weaknesses as we pray. There is therefore clear enough scriptural warrant to encourage us to pray not only to God the Father (which seems to be the primary pattern, and certainly follows the example that Jesus taught us in the Lord's Prayer), but also to pray directly to God the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Both are correct, and we may pray either to the Father or to the Son.

But should we pray to the Holy Spirit? Though no prayers directly addressed to the Holy Spirit are recorded in the New Testament, there is nothing that would forbid such prayer, for the Holy Spirit, like the Father and the Son, is fully God and is worthy of prayer and is powerful to answer our prayers. (Note also Ezekiel's invitation to the "breath" or "spirit" in Ezek. 37:9.) To say that we cannot pray to the Holy Spirit is really saying that we cannot talk to him or relate to him personally, which hardly seems right. He also relates to us in a personal way since he is a "Comforter" or "Counselor" (John 14:16, 26), believers "know him" (John 14:17), and he teaches us (cf. John 14:26), bears witness to us that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16), and can be grieved by our sin (Eph. 4:30). Moreover, the Holy Spirit exercises personal volition in the distribution of spiritual gifts, for he "continually distributes to each one individually to each one as he wills" (1 Cor. 12:11, author's translation). Therefore, it does not seem wrong to pray directly to the Holy Spirit at times, particularly when we are asking him to do something that relates to his special areas of ministry or responsibility.

In fact, through the history of the church several well-used hymns have been prayers to the Holy Spirit (see two at the end of chapter 30, pp. 655-56; one at chapter 52, pp. 1047-48; and one at chapter 53, pp. 1087-88). But this is not the New Testament pattern, and it should not become the dominant emphasis in our prayer life.

4. Response:

- a. Notice that Article 2 of the Westminster Confession of Faith above encourages prayer to the Son through the mediation of the Son and in the name of the Son!
- b. The fact that several hymns encourage us to pray to the Spirit does not mean that this should be a biblical precedent. It only argues that some advocate it.
- c. We have already established that the Spirit is indeed God (see previous study). However, in contrast to the emphasis of numerous reformed and charismatic churches today, Scripture is clear that the Spirit is not to be glorified.
  - 1) Jesus noted that the Spirit would glorify Him: "He [the Spirit of truth] will *bring glory to me* by taking what is mine and making it known to you" (John 16:14).
  - 2) Paul added, "We... are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory *in Christ Jesus*, and who put no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3).
- d. However, as Grudem notes above, the Spirit is intimately involved in our lives in numerous ways. Also, since He prays for us, He certainly understands our hearts when we pray to Him and presumably places these requests and praises before the Father and the Son.

B. The Role of the Holy Spirit in Our Praying

1. Romans 8:26-27 says, "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 with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."
2. Response:
  - a. This verse applies to *all* Christians, as the entire chapter indicates His ministries for us all (v. 23 says we all await our adoption and vv. 29-30 speak of our predestination, calling, justification, etc.). This is not a ministry of the Spirit only for a select few.
  - b. While some (e.g., Grudem, 381) say that we are the speakers, the verse says it is *the Spirit* who speaks, not us. Since the Spirit is the subject, nothing in the verse says anything about humans speaking. The Spirit intercedes "for" us, not "through" us, as charismatics claim.
  - c. When the Spirit does speak, He does so with *inaudible, nonuttered*, internal groanings. "The word *alaletos* has the idea of 'unexpressed,' 'wordless,' [BAGD 34] or 'unutterable' [Liddell/Scott 60]. Cranfield feels that the choice lies between 'ineffable,' 'that cannot be expressed in ordinary speech,' or 'unspoken,' with the next verse suggesting the latter. The *a* in *alaletos* is similar to the English prefix 'un-' (*a-laletos* = un-spoken); the expression means 'unspoken' or 'inaudible.' Since it is in combination with the word 'groanings,' there is little possibility that any audible utterance is meant in the verse" (Thomas R. Edgar, *Satisfied by the Promise of the Spirit* [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996], 178-79).
  - d. We should oppose the idea that special gifts for prayer or praise to God is the possession of certain Christians. Every Christian has this privilege since we all have equal access to God through Christ.

## Blasphemy Against the Spirit

### I. The Problem Stated

#### A. Christ's Statement

1. "And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come" (Matt. 12:31-32).
2. "I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin" (Mark 3:28-29).
3. This statement does not appear in Luke's account of this story (Luke 11:14-22).
4. Hebrews 6:4-6 seems to speak of the same sin.

#### B. Unacceptable Interpretations

1. Using Christ's name in vain
2. A sinful lifestyle that causes a Christian to lose his salvation forever (not repentable)
3. Cessationists will not go to heaven
4. This sin could only happen during His earthly ministry and thus cannot happen today. Jesus isn't physically here performing miracles—it has to be committed to His face.
5. A non-Christian's unbelief which lasts until death

### II. The Problem Solved

- A. **The Context**: Jesus was accused of casting out demons by Satan's power on at least three occasions. Once it took place near Capernaum (Matt. 9:34) and another time in Judea or Perea (Luke 11:14-23). However, the climactic event took place in Galilee and indicated the leaders' utter refusal to believe (Matt. 12:22-37; cf. Mark 3:20-30). This resulted in Christ's turning to parables, especially concerning the mysterious form of the kingdom (Matt. 13).

Note now the setting for the story in Matthew's account:

1. Christ's healing of the blind/mute (Matt. 12:22; cf. Luke 11:14)
2. The audience's conclusion: "He's Messiah!" (Matt. 12:23)
3. The Pharisee's accusation: "He's demonic!" (Matt. 12:24)

4. Christ's threefold response (Matt. 12:25-29)
  - a. Satan never fights against himself (25-26)
  - b. Jewish exorcists don't cast demons out by Satan's power, so neither did Jesus (27)
  - c. Since God's power had overcome Satan's, God's kingdom had come (28-29)

#### B. The Nature of the Sin

1. Blasphemy is something spoken with the tongue but revealing what is in the heart
2. The statement is spoken against the Spirit—not Christ (Matt. 12:31-32a)
3. The sin has eternal results because those who commit it refuse to repent (Matt. 12:32b). Therefore, this sin can be committed only by non-Christians.
4. This is the willful sin of attributing Christ's miracles to Satan despite seeing His person and power.
5. Note that this is a different sin than the one mentioned in 1 John 5:16-17, which mentions "a sin that leads to death." In this case, the issue is not that the sin is unforgiven, but only that it results in physical death. The sin noted there appears to relate to the context in teaching a serious error about Christ (Grudem, 509). Alternatively, it could relate to treating Christ's name in such an unholy manner that God takes the sinner to heaven as He did with Corinthian believers who so abused the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:30).

### III. Suggestions for Counseling

- A. Make sure the person has placed genuine faith in Christ's atoning death.
- B. Assure the *Christian* with this concern that if it is indeed a concern, then it *shouldn't* be! People who commit this sin don't care if they do!

---

The seal below is one of the few intact ancient letters found by archaeologists. It reveals how letters were sealed during New Testament times. After being folded carefully many times, wax was placed over the edges and stamped with the sender's seal. This guaranteed both the security and the ownership of the letter by the sender. This illustrates how the Spirit Himself is the believer's seal, assuring both his eternal security and his ownership by God! For further explanation, see the following two pages.

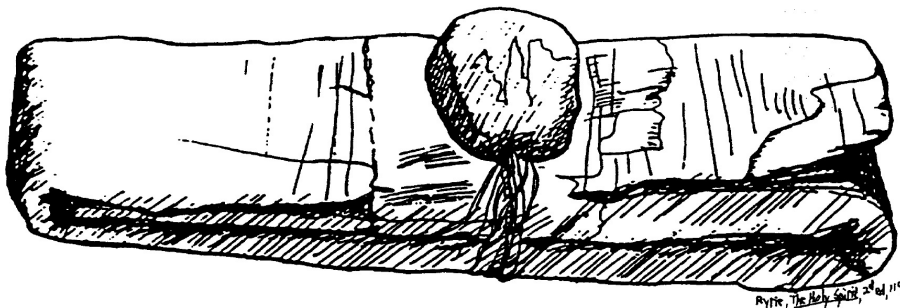


Figure 15.1 An ancient papyrus and seal

## The Indwelling & Sealing of the Spirit (Rom. 8)

(cf. Romans notes, 155q-r)

### I. Confusion: All or Part at Salvation?

- A. Sometimes Christians pray that they will receive the Spirit at some point after salvation.
  - 1. The reception of the Spirit came *after* salvation in some passages in Scripture:  
  
Acts 2 (cf. 1:4-5)  
  
Acts 8:14-17  
  
(Acts 19:1-7 refers to OT believers in Messiah)
  - 2. Christians sometimes point to these verses for support that the Spirit does not indwell all believers. They contend that every Christian must seek His indwelling.
- B. The Issue: Do we receive all or part of God when we become a Christian? (In other words, can God be divided up into parts, each of whom comes at different times?)

### II. The Indwelling of the Spirit (adapted from Charles Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 67-73)

- A. The Spirit indwells even carnal believers (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19).
- B. Since the Spirit is a gift given indiscriminately (Acts 11:17; cf. 10:44), believers cannot earn Him (John 7:37-39; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Cor. 5:5).
- C. Absence of the Spirit indicates an unregenerate state (Rom. 8:9b; Jude 19; cf. 1 Cor. 2:14).
- D. The Spirit abides forever (John 14:16), though Christians can grieve Him (Eph. 4:30).
- E. The obedience requirement for the indwelling (Acts 5:32) is the obedience of faith in Christ.
- F. The times when the Spirit was withdrawn due to sin (1 Sam. 16:14; Ps. 51:11; Luke 11:13) all occurred before Pentecost when He was given permanently (Acts 2; cf. John 14:16).
- G. The delay of giving the Spirit to the Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17) is not the norm for today:
  - 1. The Spirit came *at the same time* as salvation for Gentiles (Acts 10:44), so if a pattern is to be followed for Gentiles today then this would be it.
  - 2. The reason the Spirit indwelt the Samaritans *after* salvation: This was the first time any Samaritans were saved, so God delayed the Spirit's coming until Jews could verify it. This tied them into the church as a whole to prevent two types of Christians.
- H. The anointing of the Spirit is given to *all* believers (2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:20, 27). No passage teaches that certain Christians are anointed and others are not.

"The difference between the anointing and indwelling seems to lie in their distinct purposes. The indwelling brings the presence of God into the life of the believer. The anointing, as far as the believer is concerned, is that he might be taught (1 John 2:20, 27). Actually, this seems to be the only purpose specified in the believer's case. However, if one may use the example of the anointing of *Christ* [Luke 4:18; Acts 4:27; 10:38; Heb. 1:9] and Old Testament *priests* [Exod. 30:32-33; cf. *anointing of kings* 1 Sam. 10:1; Zech 4:14], then another purpose emerges—that of service. But...the full experience of the anointing depends on being filled with the Spirit" (Ryrie, 73).

### III. The Sealing of the Spirit (cf. Eldon Woodcock, "The Seal of the Holy Spirit" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 155 [April-June 1998]: 139-63)

- A. Agent: God is the agent of the sealing (i.e., He is the one who seals the believer), according to 2 Corinthians 1:22 (cf. John 6:27).
- B. Sphere: "The Holy Spirit is the seal. The believer is sealed with or in the Spirit. In Ephesians 1:13 there is no preposition expressed" (Ryrie, 80). In other words, technically we are not sealed "by" the Spirit but "with" the Spirit.
- C. Extent: All believers are sealed:
  1. All the Corinthian believers (carnal and spiritual alike) were sealed (2 Cor. 1:22).
  2. Christians are nowhere exhorted to seek a sealing.
  3. The believer's sealing is the basis for the exhortation not to grieve the Spirit (Eph. 4:30).
- D. Time: Since all Christians are sealed, this must happen at salvation.
- E. Intent: There exist two purposes for the sealing of Christians:
  1. Security: It assures that since God gave us His Spirit, He will give us our entire inheritance in heaven as well (2 Cor. 1:22b; Eph. 4:30), including redeeming our bodies (Eph. 1:13-14).
  2. Ownership: It shows that God owns us (2 Cor. 1:22b, "seal of ownership")

### IV. Security and Assurance

	Eternal Security	Assurance of Salvation
Basic Meaning	Being saved from the penalty of sin forever (once saved, always saved)	<u>Knowing</u> that we are saved from the penalty of sin forever
Definition	"The work of God which guarantees that the gift of salvation, once received, is forever and cannot be lost" (Ryrie, <i>Basic Theology</i> , 328)	"The realization of the truth of eternal security or perseverance" (Ryrie, <i>Basic Theology</i> , 328)
Spirit's Ministry	Sealing (Eph. 1:13-14)	Assuring (Rom. 8:15-17)
Believer's...	Position as child of God (Rom. 8:16b)	Practice of confidence (Rom. 8:16a)
Recipients	All Christians possess	Some Christians doubt
Permanence	Can't be lost (John 6:39-40; 10:27-29; Rom. 8:30, 38-39; Heb. 7:25)	Can be lost (for this reason John wrote 1 John 5:11-13)
Songs	"I Know Whom I Have Believed"	"Blessed Assurance"

Clarification: Preservation is largely the same as eternal security, but perseverance focuses more on the believer who perseveres (through the decree and power of God). In contrast, security focuses on God—it is God who secures our salvation (Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 328).

### V. Conclusion

- A. We are secure in Christ with the Spirit's presence, and He will never leave us (Heb. 13:5)!
- B. The Holy Spirit guarantees us that once we have Him, it is only a matter of time before we will have our entire heavenly inheritance.
- C. A believer has security whether or not he has assurance.

## Interpretive Issues on Spirit Baptism

(cf. 1 Corinthians notes, 161x-z)

### I. The Issue Stated

- A. Both John and Jesus promised the disciples that they would be baptized with the Spirit, which was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). The Spirit is not mentioned as the agent (the one who baptizes) in these references in the Gospels and Acts, but all translations show him to be the agent in 1 Corinthians 12:13. The translation of “baptized *with* the Spirit” in the Gospels/Acts is accepted by both charismatic and non-charismatic interpreters.
- B. However, a difference of opinion occurs regarding 1 Corinthians 12:13, translated as follows:

“For we were all baptized by\* one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink” (NIV, \*Marginal Note: Or *with*, or *in*)

“For by\* one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slave or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit” (NASB, \*Marginal Note: Or *in*)

Because of the added phrase “into one body,” both interpretive camps see a need to render the “by one Spirit” phrase differently than in the gospels. The Pentecostal choice is “in one Spirit,” but the non-Pentecostal view is “by one Spirit.” Both “in” and “by” are acceptable grammatically, but theology and the rest of the verse must also be considered to make the best decision.

### II. The Choices Reviewed

The phrase ***Baptizo en Pneumati*** can be translated in three different ways:

- A. “Baptized in the Spirit”: This translation makes the Spirit the *element* (or sphere) into which a believer is spiritually baptized. This standard Pentecostal interpretation is advocated by some commentaries on 1 Corinthians (e.g., Gordon D. Fee, NICNT, 606; Leon Morris, TNTC, 174; Robertson/Plummer, ICC, 272; cf. NIV and NASB margins). These commentaries translate the next phrase “so as to become one body” (instead of the NIV “into one body”) with the idea that the Church is the end or goal of the baptism.
- B. “Baptized by the Spirit”: This option makes the Spirit the *agent* or the one who does the baptizing. Most, if not all, reputable translations and paraphrases follow this interpretation (NIV, NASB, KJV, NKJV, Amplified, GNB, RSV, LB, Phillips, etc.). They all note that believers are baptized “into one body” so that the Church is the element (or sphere).
- C. “Baptized with the Spirit”: This makes the Spirit the *instrument* in the baptism, a meaning which is used consistently in the Gospels and Acts. However, few (if any) translations render it this way in 1 Corinthians 12:13, though it is grammatically possible (cf. NIV margin; MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*, 231-32; my view on the next few pages).
- \* Some may hope that all three views exist at the same time (cf. David Lowery, “1 Corinthians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 2:533). However, this is unlikely as the *sphere* (element) in the text is specifically designated to be the body of Christ.
- \*\* Note that the concept of a “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” is not a scriptural designation since the Greek preposition *en* (ἐν) only very rarely means “of” (an exception is Rom. 5:15 ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι “the gift of grace”).



### III. The Significance of the Issue

Why does it make any difference whether the translation is “in the Spirit” or “by the Spirit”?

- A. The issue affects whether we must have a post-conversion Spirit baptism (a so-called “second blessing”) after our salvation, evidenced by speaking in tongues (cf. Acts 2:4). The “in the Spirit” view makes 1 Corinthians 12:13 teach a different baptism than the gospels/Acts and thus divides the Church into the “haves” and the “have-nots” (those with a special baptism experience versus “non-Spirit-baptized” believers).
- B. The issue affects whether the baptizing and filling of the Spirit are separate (non-charismatic) or the same (charismatic) experiences.
- C. The issue affects distinctions regarding whether the Church began on the day of Pentecost (non-charismatic) or not (charismatic). The latter view produces a much different conception of what is meant by the body of Christ, for it has the problem of explaining how the Church existed in the OT without any baptizing work of the Spirit. (Other problems also result from having the Church exist prior to Acts 2.)

### IV. Reasons why “baptized with the Spirit into one body” may be the best solution

- A. One phrase (*baptizo en pneumatī*) describes the same work of the Spirit throughout the NT. The other uses of *baptizo en pneumatī* contrast John the Baptist as an agent of baptism with Christ as an agent of baptism (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16). Each of these references clearly mention Christ as the agent who “will baptize you *with* the Holy Spirit.” While the sphere into which Christ baptizes is not stated, this sphere is clearly indicated in 1 Corinthians 12:13 as the body of Christ, the Church. Thus, both the agent and the sphere are noted in Scripture, leaving us with the Spirit as the instrument.
- B. In none of the six cases above is the Spirit the *sphere* (element) into which people were baptized, so why would He be the element in 1 Corinthians 12:13?
  - 1. It makes much better sense to see the Spirit and Christ working together as dual agents to baptize believers into Christ’s body, reflected in “View B” on the next page and translated this way in most Bibles. (All reputable translations adhere to this view. While this itself is not determinative, note that a unanimous opinion exists against the Pentecostal interpretation of the verse.)
  - 2. Perhaps it is even better to interpret *baptizo en pneumatī* as indicating instrument/means. This way the same phrase is used in a consistent manner throughout the New Testament. Perhaps significantly, “Nowhere in the Bible is the Holy Spirit spoken of as the baptizer” (MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*, 231).
- C. The Corinthian church did not *become* one body because of the Spirit baptism. Rather, it only joined the *already existing* universal church when these Corinthians were saved.
- D. The translation of “in the Spirit” with its associated “so as to become one body” sheds doubt on whether all believers have received this Spirit baptism, which would contradict Romans 8:9.

## Summary of Interpretations on Spirit Baptism

	Gospel/Acts	1 Corinthians 12:13		
	Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 2:33; 11:16	<b>View A</b> Pentecostal Interpretation	<b>View B</b> All Bible Translations, Non-Pentecostal View	<b>View C</b> Non-Pentecostal View —My View
<b>Translation:</b> How is <i>baptizo en pneumati</i> rendered?	"will baptize you <i>with</i> the Holy Spirit"	"We were all baptized <i>in</i> one Spirit <i>so as to become</i> one body"	"We were all baptized <i>by</i> one Spirit <i>into</i> one body"	"We were all baptized <i>with</i> one Spirit <i>into</i> one body"
<b>Agent:</b> Who baptizes? ("by...")	Christ	(Unstated)	Holy Spirit (under Christ)	(Unstated)—but the gospels show Him to be Christ
<b>Instrument:</b> With what or whom is the believer baptized?	Holy Spirit —Matt. 3 says all are baptized either with the Spirit (v. 11, believers) or with fire (v. 12, unbelievers)	(Unstated)	(Unstated)	Holy Spirit
<b>Sphere:</b> Into what <i>element</i> is the baptism?	(Unstated)	Holy Spirit	Body of Christ	Body of Christ
<b>Goal:</b> To what <i>end</i> or purpose is the baptism?	(Unstated)	Body of Christ	(Unstated)	(Unstated)
<b>Body:</b> How is <i>eis hen soma</i> translated?	N/A	"so as to become one body" (goal or end)	"into one body" (sphere)	"into one body" (sphere)— same use in Rom. 6:3-4; Gal 3:26-27
<b>Correlation of Gospels/Acts with 1 Cor 12:13</b>	—	Inconsistent	More consistent	Most consistent
<b>Resulting Theology</b>	N/A	Not all Christians have Spirit baptism (we should seek it)	All Christians already have Spirit baptism (we shouldn't seek it)	All Christians already have Spirit baptism (we shouldn't seek it)

**Translation:** "with the Spirit"

"in one Spirit"

"by one Spirit"

"with one  
~ . . ."

**Agent:** by

Christ

Christ?

Spirit

Christ?

**Instrument:** with

Spirit

?

?

Spirit

**Sphere:** into

Body?

Spirit

Body

Body

**Goal:** so as to become ?

one body

?

?

## Spirit Baptism & 1 Corinthians 13:8

Charles C. Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 2nd ed., 113, 147

### THE BAPTISM IN OR BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

(*baptizein en pneumati*)

PREDICTED IN THE GOSPELS	FIRST FULFILLED ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST	EXPLAINED BY PAUL
Matt 3:11 Mark 1:8 Luke 3:16 John 1:33 (God→John) (John→people)	Acts 1:5 Acts 11:15-16 Acts 2	1 Corinthians 12:13
	USUAL INTERPRETATION	NEOPENTECOSTAL INTERPRETATION
GOSPELS	IN Holy Spirit is sphere Christ is Agent	IN Holy Spirit is sphere Christ is Agent
ACTS	BY Holy Spirit is Agent Body of Christ is sphere	IN Affects only some for tongues, power
1 CORINTHIANS	BY	BY Holy Spirit is Agent Body of Christ is sphere Affects all

If εν = in (all occurrences), then 2 spheres < Holy Spirit  
Body of Christ (post-Pentecost revelation)

If εν = by (all occurrences), then 2 agents < Christ  
Holy Spirit (post-Pentecost revelation, Acts 2:33)

BUT . . . only 1 baptism (Ephesians 4:5)

SOURCE: Charles Caldwell Ryrie. Materials from *Basic Theology*, Chariot Victor Publishing, copyright 1986. Used by permission of Chariot Victor Publishing.

### First Corinthians 13:8

Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there be tongues, they will cease; if there be knowledge, it will be done away.

GIFT	GREEK VERB	TENSE	VOICE	MEANING
PROPHECY	καταργέω KATARGEO	FUTURE	PASSIVE	To Render Inoperative
TONGUES	παύω PAUO	FUTURE	MIDDLE	To Cease (of their own accord)
KNOWLEDGE	καταργέω KATARGEO	FUTURE	PASSIVE	To Render Inoperative

SOURCE: Professor Manfred E. Kober, Faith Baptist College and Theological Seminary, Ankeny, Iowa 50021. Used by Permission.

## The Baptism and Filling with the Spirit

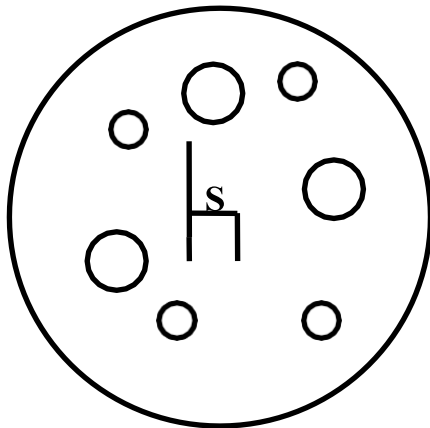
One key issue that must be clear to understand the Scripture's teaching on charismatic issues is the biblical distinction between the Holy Spirit's ministries of baptizing and filling:

	<b>The Baptism with the Holy Spirit</b>	<b>The Filling with the Holy Spirit</b>
<b>Definition or Purpose</b>	The Spirit's work of placing believers into the body of Christ	The Spirit's work of empowering (controlling) believers for service and equipping them with Christ's character
<b>Scripture</b>	Prophesied (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5); Fulfilled (Acts 2:1ff.; cf. 11:15-16); Explained (1 Cor 12:13)	"Walk by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16) "Keep in step with the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25) Be "led by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:18)
<b>Key Passage</b>	1 Corinthians 12:13	Ephesians 5:18
<b>Tense</b>	Aorist: past event, action undefined	Present: continuous, action repeated
<b>Mood</b>	Indicative: a statement of fact ("were baptized"), never commanded or shown "how to get the baptism"	Imperative: a command to heed ("be filled"), shown how to receive the filling by yielding ourselves to Christ
<b>Time Occurs</b>	At salvation "promise...is for all" (Acts 2:38-39) when they believed (Acts 11:16-17) "every spiritual blessing" (Eph. 1:3) "complete in him" (Col. 2:9-10) Believers have been given "everything pertaining to...godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3)	At and after salvation
<b>Frequency</b>	Not repeated (a one-time experience)	Repeated (throughout one's life; compare Acts 9:17; 13:9)
<b>Participants</b>	All Christians (spiritual and carnal) ("we were all baptized" 1 Cor 12:13; cf. Gal. 3:2, 14; 4:6)	Spiritual Christians
<b>Permanence</b>	Eternal: cannot be undone	Temporal: can be lost (Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31)
<b>Prerequisites</b>	Faith in Christ	Yielding to Christ
<b>OT occurrences?</b>	No: never happened before Pentecost	Yes: OT believers sometimes empowered for service by the Spirit but not indwelt
<b>Results</b>	Position: Placed in the body of Christ (Church)	Practice: Praise, worship, thanksgiving, submissiveness (Eph. 5:19-21); Christlike character (Gal. 5:22-23); Evangelistic involvement (Acts 2:4 w/ 2:41; 4:31 w/ 5:14; 6:3 w/ 6:7)
<b>Commanded?</b>	No	Yes
<b>Sought?</b>	No (Acts 11:15-16)	Yes

## Walking by the Spirit

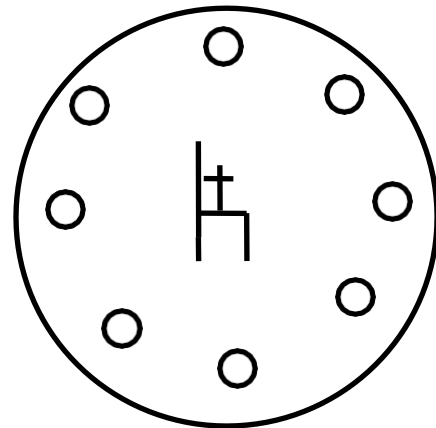
1 Corinthians 2:14–3:3

Adapted from the booklet *How to Be Filled with the Holy Spirit* (Campus Crusade for Christ)\*

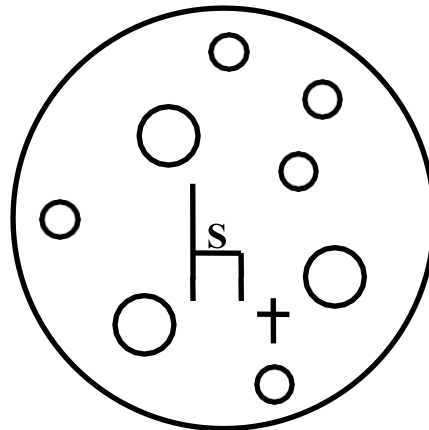


**Natural Man**

+



**Spiritual Man**



**Carnal Man**



**Throne (control center)**



**Interests**

**S**

**Self**



**Christ**

- Typically, the phrase "walking in the Spirit" is used regarding this ministry of the Spirit, but this phrase designates the *sphere* (which is the body of Christ). A better term is "walking by the Spirit," which more accurately conveys *dependence*, as the phrase is a dative of means (Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 1st ed., 100).

## How the Spirit Leads Us

A Singaporean friend gave me a booklet in 1981 that has had a profound impact on me. George Mueller was a German missionary to England in the mid-1800s, with whom many Christians are acquainted. He founded several orphanages for the Lord and saw God answer over 50,000 prayers recorded in his lifetime (he kept a meticulous journal of his requests and God's answers). I know of no other human source that can help us seize the will of God more than Mueller. Here are his steps on how the Spirit guided him during his lifetime, which spanned over 92 years (1805-1898).

1. I SEEK AT THE BEGINNING to get my heart into such a state that it has no will of its own regarding a given matter. Nine-tenths of the trouble with people is just here. Nine-tenths of the difficulties are overcome when our hearts are ready to do the Lord's will, whatever it may be. When one is truly in this state, it is usually but a little way to the knowledge of what His will is.
2. HAVING DONE THIS, I do not leave the result to feeling or simple impression. If I do so, I make myself liable to great delusions.
3. I SEEK THE WILL of the Spirit of God through, or in connection with, the Word of God. The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone without the Word, I lay myself open to great delusions also. If the Holy Ghost guides us at all, He will do it according to the Scriptures and never contrary to them.
4. NEXT, I TAKE into account providential circumstances. These often plainly indicate God's will in connection with His Word and Spirit.
5. I ASK GOD in prayer to reveal His will to me aright.
6. THUS, THROUGH PRAYER to God, the study of the Word, and reflection, I come to a deliberate judgment according to the best of my ability and knowledge, and if my mind is thus at peace, and continues so after two or three more petitions, I proceed accordingly.

In trivial matters and in transactions involving the most important issues, I have found this method always effective.

Source: George Mueller, "How I Ascertain the Will of God," from "An Hour with George Mueller: The Man of Faith to Whom God Gave Millions" ed. A. Sims (Warren Myers, P.O. Box 125: Singapore), ca. 1981.

---

We tend to want to jump right to step 5, don't we?

Step 1 is the hardest, but it's also the most important.

## Holy Laughter

### I. History

- A. In 1993 Randy Clark, pastor of Vineyard Christian Fellowship in St. Louis, Missouri, was depressed but helped by Rodney Howard-Browne, a South African evangelist who had moved his ministry to the USA in Tulsa, Oklahoma.
- B. On January 20, 1994, the Airport Vineyard church in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, pastor John Arnott requested Howard-Browne to lead a four-day conference. These meetings showcased weeping, laughing, groaning, swaying with “drunkenness,” and other strange expressions such as people walking around like chickens and roaring like lions. The conference lasted months and this phenomenon became dubbed “The Toronto Blessing.” Howard-Browne has become the “evangelist” to spread it throughout the world, so now he is the key figure. It has so swept the world that an estimated 200-400 German Protestant churches and 5,000 of the estimated 50,000 Anglican and Protestant churches in the UK have experienced it (“IDEA” magazine?).
- C. In September 1995 thousands of Singaporeans converged on the Singapore Indoor Stadium to witness the event sponsored jointly by 40 Singapore churches. People fell down, laughed hysterically, and even were floored en masse by Howard-Browne. The final evening at the national Stadium drew a crowd of 12,000. Reaction has been mixed.
- D. John Wimber eventually withdrew his support of the movement due to its excesses. Several Pentecostal and charismatic leaders also do not support it.

### II. Biblical Evaluation (for complete citations of sources, see the following bibliography)

- A. Scripture warns against being a “sign seeker”: “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign” (Matt. 12:39; cf. Luke 11:29; John 4:48). The Laughter Movement emphasizes God’s work primarily through our emotions—a sign warned against by Christ Himself. Does not God primarily work in the ordinary events of life? Advocates and critics both cite parallels to the 18th-century revivals under Finney and Edwards, noting that the Toronto experience is not something new. Yet this neglects that such is new in Christian circles in our day, causing many to want to “see a sign” (or “better,” to experience it).
- B. Believers already possess all they need in Christ (Eph. 1:3; cf. Ps. 84:11), so why should they feel they don’t already have a “blessing”? Our relationship with God is not hindered by a “lack of the Blessing,” but by sin (Isa. 59:2).
- C. Paul warned Titus to “avoid foolish controversies” (Titus 3:9) since they are “unprofitable and useless.” What could be more foolish than Christians acting like animals—clucking and walking like chickens, hooting like owls, hopping like kangaroos, mooing like cows, soaring like eagles, hissing and moving like snakes, barking like dogs, roaring like lions, and oinking like pigs with uncontrollable laughter? Such actions were a sign of judgment in Jeremiah 51:37-39. Also, are such actions consistent with God’s desire that we be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29)?
- D. This movement, like many which preceded it, will pass as another charismatic fad. Why not invest time, energy, and money into the Word of God and people which will last forever (Matt. 24:35)? Proponents argue for the movement based on Gamaliel’s recommendation to leave the early church alone to see if it would succeed (Acts 5:38-39); however, though this advice is in the Bible, it is not biblical as it is false reasoning by an opponent of the gospel. Even though it will pass, it still must be evaluated biblically. Biblical admonitions remind us to “contend for the faith” (Jude 3) and “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1).
- E. Whereas in the Gospels (Matt. 9:35) and Acts (14:3), spectacular occurrences validated the message of Jesus and the apostles, during these “holy laughter” meetings here in Singapore no gospel content was shared at all. The message of Christ was entirely replaced by devotion to bizarre experiences, despite the fact that the gospel itself is the power of God (Rom. 1:16).



- F. The NT commands that “everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way” (1 Cor. 14:40). The “holy laughter” meetings are characterised by disruptive and disorderly (hysterical) laughter, people walking around clucking like chickens, and people falling down “slain in the Spirit”—all which can hardly be described as fitting and orderly. In contrast, the true God is “not a God of disorder but of peace” (1 Cor. 14:33a).
- G. The so-called “blessing” encourages believers to set aside their minds in direct violation to the Bible which commands engagement of one’s intellect in prayer and singing (1 Cor. 14:15) and in evaluation of spirits (1 John 4:1). No wonder that many believers dabbling in New Age heresies have experienced “holy” laughter (Smith, 6). Guy Chevreau’s defense of the movement even makes this bold claim: “It is the *experiential* reality of God that stands at the centre of biblical faith” (emphasis his, p. 43).
- H. Miracles are not necessarily evidences of God’s power, for Satan’s workers can also perform miracles (Matt. 7:22), especially in the last days (Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:9). Many pagan groups have identical phenomena, such as Hindu cults, New Agers, the ancient Chinese Qigong practice and the Subud practice of moving the consciousness beyond the mind. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, in *Dance Your Way to God*, advocates, “Just be joyful... God is not serious... this world cannot fit with a theological God... so let this be your constant reminder, to laugh your way to God” (cited by Clements, 16). Psychotherapy has also had the same manifestations (ibid.). Finally, the fact that some have genuinely experienced the hand of God in their lives does not validate the experience; rather, it demonstrates that God can work despite man’s abuses in His name.
- I. Rodney Howard-Browne denies the deity and humanity of Christ, both of which are cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith (John 1:1, 14).
- J. The “falling down” experiences are of no benefit, in contrast to the compassionate, miraculous deeds of Christ and the apostles that genuinely helped people. The scriptural accounts of falling down (Gen. 15:12; 1 Sam. 19:24; Ezek. 3:23; Dan. 8:17; 10:9; John 18:6; Acts 9:4; Rev. 1:17) are cited as support (Jackson, 3). These “fallings” are not the same experience. Each example cited responded to a direct confrontation by an angel or God Himself, resulting in a conscious falling down in worship and awe (John 11:32; Acts 9:4; 22:7; 1 Cor. 14:25). In only three accounts (Dan. 8:15-27; Acts 10:9-16; Rev. 1:17) did the recipient lose consciousness, and each case was exceptional in that they had to do with significant revelations from God (Packer, “Falling,” 4). Also, scriptural “fallings” occurred whether the recipient was open to it or not, in contrast to the Laughter Movement which requires openness to receive the “falling.” Not one of the revivals in the book of Acts records people falling down (Acts 2:1-42, 46-47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7; 9:35; 11:20-21; 12:24; 14:1; 19:17-20). Finally, in the Scriptures above people fell forward with humility before God. The only likeness to the present phenomenon where people fall backwards without a sense of repentant humility is the account of the Roman soldiers who fell backwards without any sense of humility, then proceeded to arrest Jesus (John 18:6)!
- K. Howard-Browne sees himself as the source of spiritual blessing, not allowing anyone else to pray for others at his meetings. This focus on the man rather than the message is unscriptural (1 Cor. 1:10-31; 2:2; 3:4-7, 21; 4:6). Numerous persons in attendance have been nauseated at his arrogant spirit. Also, Howard-Browne’s practice of laying hands on almost everybody is contrary to Scripture (1 Tim. 5:22) and is a practice similar to that desired by Simon the Sorcerer who also sought to “dispense the Holy Spirit” for personal ends (Acts 8:18-19). Surely Howard-Browne does not have a monopoly on the Holy Spirit.
- L. The focus on pleasure rather than holiness is like those who followed Christ for food rather than having their hearts changed (John 6:26-27). Genuine revivals show repentance, not laughter.
- M. Scripture encourages hearing over seeing as one cannot evaluate results only for truth (Deut. 13:1-5; 2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:13-15).

- N. Rodney Howard-Browne does not care about the source of the phenomenon: “As long as something is happening it really does not matter if it is of God, of man or of the devil” (Rodney Howard-Browne, “Personal Freedom Outreach Letter,” P.O. Box 26062, St. Louis, MO, USA, pp. 3-5). In contrast, 1 John 4:1 tells us, “Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (cf. 2 Cor. 11:4). We are warned that this particularly will be the case in the last days (1 Tim. 4:1).
- O. Defenders of the movement cite scriptural examples of shaking (Dan. 10:7; Ps. 99:1; 114:7; Jer. 5:22; 23:9; Hab. 3:16; Acts 4:31; Jas. 2:19), but shaking in the Bible is from holy fear, not a violent and indiscreet type characteristic of the present phenomena. Even the Toronto supporter Bill Jackson admits that the movement’s shaking is “related more to prophetic ministry and impartation of spiritual gifts.” He admits that it has parallels more with George Fox (1624-1691, founder of the Quakers) than with Scripture (Jackson, 5). Jackson gives no biblical support of shaking being associated with the impartation of spiritual gifts, for every believer has in fact been gifted since salvation—and without any shaking phenomenon (1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 18).
- P. Toronto advocates cite biblical support for crying (Neh. 8:9; 2 Chron. 34:27; Acts 2:37), but these biblical examples of crying are always a response to conviction over sin. This is not the experience of the Laughter Movement, where crying and laughing appear together. Even Howard-Browne notes that these are inappropriate: “One night I was preaching on hell, and laughter just hit the whole place. The more I told the people what hell was like, the more they laughed” (*Charisma* magazine, August 1994, p. 24). Would not crying be a more appropriate response, given the remorse of the rich man in hades (Luke 16:23-24)?
- Q. The biblical emphasis lies with joy rather than laughter. These two are not the same, for joy is an inner attribute or fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22) whereas laughter is an emotional response of the emotions (cf. James 4:9). Laughter in Scripture can be either in merriment or scorn, but is almost always seen in a negative light: Abraham and Sarah’s laughter was one of unbelief (Gen. 17:17; 18:12) and believers were warned against laughter (Luke 6:25; James 4:9). Very rarely is laughter seen in positive terms (Gen. 21:6; Luke 6:21). Even Psalm 126:1-2, which notes that Israelites rejoiced at the end of their seventy years of captivity with laughter, is an emotional response with no spiritual significance. Laughter is not a fruit, a gift, or an attribute of the Spirit that can be imparted.
- R. Biblical revivals had no laughing phenomenon. This includes the largest recorded in Scripture, when 3000 were saved (Acts 2:41) and another 2000 men came to faith weeks later (Acts 4:4). David Packer notes that not one of the revivals in the Bible records laughing (cf. Josh. 5:2-9; 1 Sam. 7:5-6; 1 Kings 18:21-40; 2 Kings 11—12; 22—23; 2 Chron. 14:2-5; 30:1-27; 33:12-19; Jonah 3:4-10; Ezra 10; Luke 3:2-14; John 4:28-42; Acts 19:18-20; cf. Packer, “Laughter,” 2). Even so-called parallels to 18th-century revivals are lacking as these revivals under Finney and Edwards centred around biblical, powerful preaching with repentance in the listeners. The Laughter movement, in contrast, has either a false gospel preached, no preaching at all, or uncontrollable laughter at the Word of God being preached.

Jonathan Edwards cited five signs based on 1 John 4 to show that God is at work: “First, God is at work when a person’s esteem for the true Jesus is raised. Second, God is at work when Satan’s kingdom is being attacked. Third, God is at work when people come to love the Scripture more. Fourth, God is at work when men are lead away from falsehood into truth. Fifth, God is at work when there is an increase in love for God and for man” (Jonathan Edwards, *Works of Jonathan Edwards* [Banner of Truth], 2:266-68; cited by Packer, “Falling,” 5). The Laughter Movement falls far short of such characteristics.

### III. Bibliography

- Benfold, Gary. "Jonathan Edwards and the 'Toronto Blessing.'" *Published Abroad* 13 (7 March 1995). my *Against the phenomenon*.
- Carden, Paul. "Newswatch: 'Toronto Blessing' Stirs Worldwide Controversy, Rocks Vineyard Movement." *Christian Research Journal* 17 (No. 3, Winter 1995).
- Cheong, Eddy. "Deceiving the Elect: A Scriptural and Critical Analysis of the Laughter Movement." E-mail: eddys@pop.jaring.my *Against the phenomenon*.
- Clements, Roy. "Toronto: A Personal Appraisal." *Now* (Cambridge: Word Alive, June 1995): 16-17. *A middle-view concerning the phenomenon*.
- Chevreau, Guy. *Catch the Fire: The Toronto Blessing, An Experience of Renewal and Revival*. USA: HarperCollins, 1994 and UK: Marshall Pickering, 1994. 224 pp. US\$8.95 CBD. *A key work which highlights the history in detail and supports the phenomenon*.
- Dager, Albert James. "Holy Laughter: A Special Report." *Media Spotlight* (Redmond, WA, 1995).
- Fearon, Mike. *A Breath of Fresh Air: A Balanced and Informed Perspective on the Unusual Phenomena Sweeping the Worldwide Church*. Guildford, Surrey, England: Eagle, 1994. 258 pp. SBC #270.82 FEA. *A British journalist's attempt at an objective look at the phenomenon, including some of its false theology*.
- Jackson, Bill. "What in the World is Happening to Us? A Biblical Perspective on Renewal/" Unpublished paper. Urbana, IL: Vineyard Campaign, April 1994. 17 pp. *An official publication supporting the phenomenon*.
- MacArthur, John F. *Reckless Faith: When the Church Loses Its Will to Discern*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1994. *Against the phenomenon*.
- Owens, Ron. "The 'Toronto Revival.'" *Special Report* 1 (Richmond, VA: Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board, Winter 1994). 3 pp. *A personal account of a visit to the Toronto meetings by the leader of the Prayer and Spiritual Awakening division of the Home Mission Board of the SBC; against the phenomenon*.
- Packer, David Lee. "A Biblical Understanding of Laughter and Laughing Before the Lord." Unpublished paper in Singapore: International Baptist Church, May 1995. 3 pp. *Against the phenomenon*.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Brief Bible Study on Issues Surrounding the Phenomena Called 'Being Slain in the Spirit.'" 5 pp. Unpublished paper in Singapore: International Baptist Church, March 1995. *Against the phenomenon*.
- Payne, Tony. "Toronto Revisited." *The Briefing* 157 (Kingsford, NSW, 1995): 2-3. *Against the phenomenon*.
- Randles, Bill. *Weighed and Found Wanting. A book against the phenomenon*.
- Roberts, Dave. *The "Toronto" Blessing*. Eastbourne, England: Kingsway, 1994. 187 pp. SBC #270.82 ROB.
- Sly, Randy. "Are You Ready for a New Wave from God?" *Current Thoughts and Trends* 10 (No. 3, March 1994): 38-41. *Supports the phenomenon*.
- Smith, Warren. "Holy Laughter or Strong Delusion?" *SCP Newsletter* 19 (Fall 1994). *Against the phenomenon*.

Van Leen, Adrian. "Finding Balance." *Impact* 19 (No. 3 June/July 1995).

#### Other Sources

Author Unknown. *Holy Laughter and the Toronto Blessing: An Investigative Report*. CBD US\$7.95. *Against the phenomenon*.

Author Unknown. *A Time to Laugh: The Holy Laughter Phenomenon Examined*. CBD US\$8.95. *Against the phenomenon*.

An excellent 28 minute documentary video shows the various holy laughter phenomena, including Howard-Browne "conversing in tongues" with Kenneth Copeland. This video also evaluates the heretical theology of the movement. Ask for the "Watching the New Wave" video, 1995, when writing Sure Hope SA Inc., P.O. Box 43 Surrey, SA 5069 Australia. Tel. (08) 369-0059. Please ask for the documentation that accompanies the video.

## Differences Between Emotional and Spiritual Laughter

Adapted from Eddy Cheong, "Deceiving the Elect," unpublished study via e-mail: eddys@pop.jaring.my

<b>Laughter as an Emotional Response</b>	<b>Spiritual Laughter as Seen in the Laughter Movement</b>
<b>The Source is from the human soul</b>	<b>The source is a spirit other than the Holy Spirit. Laughter is not an attribute, fruit or gift of the Holy Spirit that can be imparted.</b>
<b>Has no spiritual significance</b>	<b>Integral part of the Laughter Movement (being "touched by the Spirit")</b>
<b>A response to stimuli (e.g. good news). Duration depends on the length of the stimulus</b>	<b>Part of the spiritual anointing and move of the Laughter Phenomenon. Part of Counterfeit Joy. Duration spirit dependent—Laughter up to 23 hours recorded!</b>
<b>Controllable</b>	<b>Usually uncontrollable</b>
<b>Not accompanied by other manifestations</b>	<b>Invariably accompanied by other manifestations—e.g., crying, howling, barking like dogs, roaring like lions (not necessarily in the same person)</b>
<b>Does not spread in geometric fashion</b>	<b>Spreads in geometric fashion</b>
<b>Not imparted by spiritual channels</b>	<b>Imparted by laying of hands, blowing, waving of hands, etc. Requires openness to receive.</b>
<b>No fixed pattern of distribution</b>	<b>Only seen in Laughter Phenomenon meetings and in non-Christian religions</b>
<b>Does not disturb church service</b>	<b>Present even when the Word of God is being read</b>
<b>Sounds natural</b>	<b>Ranges from the natural to eerie and bordering on the hysterical. Congregation told to start in the flesh and hook up to the spiritual.</b>

## Anatomy of Deception

A Comparative Study of Eve's Deception with the Modus Operandi of the Laughter Movement

Adapted from Eddy Cheong, "Deceiving the Elect," unpublished study via e-mail: eddys@pop.jaring.my

	EVE	LAUGHTER MOVEMENT
<b>Step One:</b>  <b>Make the person bypass or side-step God's Word by lies and half-truths</b>	<b>Half Truth:</b> "Did not God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" (Gen. 3:1)  <b>Lie:</b> "'You will not surely die,' the serpent said to the woman" (Gen. 3:4)	<b>Do not subject the Holy Spirit to doctrine, open up your mind, chop off your head. Be open to any move of the Spirit.</b>
<b>Step Two:</b>  <b>Open the person up to his or her emotions</b>	<b>"When the woman saw that the tree was <i>good for food and pleasing to the eyes and also desirable for gaining wisdom...</i>" (Gen. 3:6)</b>	<b>Attractive testimonies and show of counterfeit joy, laughter, God paying off debts...</b>
<b>Step Three:</b>  <b>A counterfeit high</b>	<b>Good Feelings:</b> "... she took some and ate it..." (Gen. 3:6)	<b>Good Feelings: counterfeit joy, instant closeness to God, etc.</b>
<b>Step Four:</b>  <b>Try to deceive others</b>	<b>"She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it" (Gen. 3:6)</b>	<b>More testimonies of good feelings and active evangelisation of Laughter Movement <i>and a different gospel</i></b>

2 Tim. 3:13 (NIV)

"...evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived"

## Normal Christian Meetings vs. Laughter Meetings

Adapted from Eddy Cheong, "Deceiving the Elect," unpublished study via e-mail: eddys@pop.jaring.my

<b>NORMAL CHRISTIAN MEETING</b>	<b>LAUGHTER MEETING</b>
<b>Few manifest</b>	<b>Many Manifest</b>
<b>Manifestations are a response to God's moving but themselves are not from God.</b>	<b>Manifestations are initiated in an ungodly spiritual move (the flesh).</b>
<b>Manifestations not allowed to disturb the service</b>	<b>Manifestations part of the service</b>
<b>Deliverance mandatory</b>	<b>No deliverance of manifestations</b>
<b>Manifestations attributed to demonic spirits</b>	<b>Manifestations supposedly "signs and wonders"</b>
<b>Feels good after deliverance (after getting it out)</b>	<b>Feels good after experience, especially with laughter (after getting it in)</b>
<b>Manifestations are variable</b>	<b>Manifestations are fairly standard (but laughter is invariably present). Do not be fooled if manifestations are mild. <i>The source is still the same.</i> There is no such thing as a mild demon!</b>

## Why are Charismatics Growing So Much in Singapore?

John Clammer, *The Sociology of Singapore Religion: Studies in Christianity and Chinese Culture*, 54

ence, possess or manifest remarkable spiritual properties. It may be that the ability to speak in tongues is so highly prized (and often sought after by those who do not possess this gift) because it is clear evidence for the possessor of spiritual reality, because it is public — others can hear whether one really has the gift or not, and because it allows anyone who has it — regardless of social status or their normal linguistic abilities, to be articulate.<sup>11</sup>

It has been suggested that, certainly in the case of classical Pentecostalism, charismatic activity is a response to powerlessness. At the most obvious level this explanation would not seem to fit the Singapore case very well, since a high proportion of charismatics are professionals and other well educated people. But at a deeper level there may be something in this when seen in the Singapore context, where most people are actually powerless. The highly bureaucratic, paternalistic and centralized nature of Singapore political culture really does mean that the average citizen has little or no control or influence over public policy or how his environment is arranged, and given the tiny scale of Singapore there are few “outs” — very little wild countryside, no mountains, only neat man-made suburban beaches and rather sterile parks for recreation. This has created a real “value-problem” in Singapore — few political outlets, a controlled urban environment and no great social causes with which to identify. In this sense there is profound powerlessness in Singapore for the bulk of the population. Charismatic activity transcends this by providing community in an individualistic society, meaning in a meaningless one, spiritual power in one where few share in social or political power, an interpretation of life and of history, a scale of values and satisfying experiences and activities. Indeed two things stand out about the way in which the charismatic movement expresses itself in Singapore — that at least at the ideological level it is strongly anti-secularist and runs quite contrary to most contemporary understandings of reality (it is creationist in its cosmology and anti-evolutionist it believes profoundly in the reality of the spiritual realm and its primacy over the material realm); and that it is obsessed with power — spiritual power to be sure, but power nevertheless, even if of a radically different kind from the secular power that most of its adherents do not possess. This question of power is important, and we will return to it later.

One of the factors which Quebedeaux sees as being important in the spread of the charismatic movement in the United States is what he terms “perception of opposition”.<sup>12</sup> In Singapore opposition does not take the form of persecution in any overt form — the state itself is secular and all religions are tolerated, even encouraged, so long as they do not conflict with the interests of the government and as a result there is great religious pluralism in the country. But op-



## Being "Slain in the Spirit"

An Open Letter to Singapore Baptist Church Pastors by Dr. David Packer

### *A BRIEF BIBLE STUDY ON ISSUES SURROUNDING THE PHENOMENA CALLED "BEING SLAIN IN THE SPIRIT"*

In recent years, and even in recent months, there has been a resurgence of the phenomena called "being slain in the spirit" or, as some people like to call it, falling before the Lord. This brief response is to give biblical and historical data to help understand what is truly of the Lord and what is reasonably questionable by sincere Christians who wish to test the spirits (1 John 4:1).

This study is entered into with the desire to be gentle and nurturing to those of opposing opinions. It is my personal feeling that these issues need not divide churches. Where Jesus Christ is preached and believed in, Christians of various backgrounds and denominations find considerable room for unity. But it is also my position that these practices have not the biblical precedent that they claim to have and in that sense are dangerous additions to the faith that can lead to abuse and to over-emphases in areas where the Bible says little or is completely silent, which in the end will lead to a neglect of the truth.

#### *An Historical Precedent*

During the Great Awakening of America and England in the 1740's, God used a man by the name of George Whitefield to bring thousands to faith in Christ and to bring churches back from the spiritual dryness and legalism which had begun to sink into the American Puritan experience. As Whitefield preached, the Lord brought people under great conviction and often in meetings, people wept emotionally, some people's knees knocked together, others went into hysterical fits, and some also fainted, as well as others jumping and shouting and causing quite a ruckus. Whitefield had never encouraged the emotionalism which had broken out at his meetings, and had taken steps to address the concerns of pastors. The issue was how to identify that which was truly spiritual and of the Spirit of God and that which was simply emotionalism. It was not that easy to resolve.

The majority of those who sincerely received Christ did not respond like this, rather it was only a few, but the sight was memorable for those who saw it. Following Whitefield's departure from America, there arose a man by the name of James Davenport, a pastor given to emotionalism. He also went around to various towns preaching evangelistic sermons under which many were converted. Many of the devout pastors of that time, notably Jonathan Edwards, grew concerned that Davenport was drifting into an area of error. They were, however, hesitant to say very much publicly because they did not want to quench the Spirit, and preferred instead to deal with the matter quietly.

Davenport, however, began to claim to have had visions, as in Joel 2 and Habakkuk 2:3, and took to denouncing other ministers, without examination or hesitation, to be lost. He began to assume an authority which he claimed came from God. His meetings were characterized by emotionalism which made Whitefield's meetings seem tame. Davenport interpreted the faintings and the emotionalism as indications of a genuine movement of the Spirit.

The concern of Jonathan Edwards, Jonathan Parsons and others grew and they finally felt compelled to address the extreme emotionalism with a concern not to quench genuine spiritualism. Several pamphlets were written to try to test the spirits and establish which was God's work and what was sheer emotionalism which might bring harm to God's work. There were, of course, others who condemned all of this as extremism, and discounted the entire movement, even Whitefield's meetings.

Davenport eventually suffered a nervous breakdown and stopped preaching. Later, 1743, he realized his error and wrote a pamphlet entitled *Confessions and Retractions* publicly apologizing for his fanaticism. Great harm, however, was done to the Great Awakening and many people moved away from the truly spiritual and emphasized dramatic emotional experiences.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Arnold a. Dallimore, George Whitefield, The Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth-Century Revival, Volume II (Crossway Books, Westchester, Illinois) pp. 179-91.

## Being "Slain in the Spirit" (Packer, 2 of 5)

"Falling Before the Lord" Page 2

Virtually without exception, the great movements of God's Spirit in the history of the Church have been accompanied by emotionalism which sometimes did damage to the truly spiritual. Extremism is often the word used to describe these. Perhaps this is a poor choice of a word because we can never be too devout, nor too committed nor too open to the Spirit of God. If "extremism" is wrong then I would hope to be found in this "error" myself because I am extremely open to the Holy Spirit and hope to lead my people to also be extremely open to all the experiences which God, the Holy Spirit desires that we should have. I prefer the term emotionalism because I believe it more clearly describes what is happening, but many writers use the word extremism.

However, another issue that is often present in these "extreme" movements is that of authority. Davenport was typical of this phenomenon. He claimed a special vision or ability or position was given him by God. To disagree or oppose him was to oppose God. This certainly contrasts with what Jesus said about the Holy Spirit's role to lead us into the truth of God (John 14:26).

### *Falling before the Lord in the Old Testament*

Our sole authority and guide for understanding the ways the Lord moves and works is the word of God. Although something may be a characteristic of revival and several great movements of the Spirit, our ultimate guide is the Bible. The spiritual side of human life is very closely connected to our emotions. This is as it should be. Our faith in Christ and our forgiveness through him evokes in us an emotional response. But emotions should be identified as emotions, and not assumed to always be the same as the Spirit's movement in our life. 1 John 4:1 instructs us not to believe every spirit but to test the spirits to see if they are of God. Here is what we can surmise from the Old Testament.

Several verses mention someone falling before the Lord. There is a pattern which is established which indicates that they did not lose consciousness or faint, rather they volitionally bowed down before the Lord, placing themselves prostrate. Some of these passages are the following:

- Genesis 17:3, Abram fell facedown
- Deut 16:4, Moses fell facedown
- Deut 9:18-29, Moses fell prostrate and prayed
- Joshua 5:14, "Joshua fell... in reverence"
- Judges 13:26, Samson's parents fell face down

In all of these experiences above, it is clear that what was being represented was falling before the Lord in worship, humility, and awe. Nowhere is it suggested in these and many other passages that the individuals lost consciousness. Notice that invariably it is emphasized that they fell face down, as is common throughout the Old Testament. Not to make light of it, but if this was what is today being represented as "being slain in the spirit" and these Old Testament believers lost consciousness and fell face down, we would have had a lot of bloody noses and black-eyes, as well as broken chins and loose teeth, mentioned in the Bible.

Two people falling down, and most of these passages use the same Hebrew word *naphal*, who were injured were Goliath (1 Samuel 17:49, he fell face down after being struck with the stone) and Eli (1 Samuel 4:18, he fell back and broke his neck). This leads us to conclude that the word *naphal* was used in a very broad fashion much like we use the word fall.<sup>2</sup> We need the context to conclude if it was an accident or volitional.

The broad use of the word in describing spiritual experiences suggests a conscious falling down in worship and awe. In every Old Testament experience with one possible exception

---

<sup>2</sup>William L. Holladay, Editor, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, "naphal", p. 241.

## Being "Slain in the Spirit" (Packer, 3 of 5)

"Falling Before the Lord" Page 3

(Daniel, which we will look at in detail) consciousness was not only present but it was an integral part of the experience for the individual or people realized some great truth and worshipped God. Other uses include the following.

1 Samuel 20:4, David fell on his face three times before Jonathan

1 Kings 18:39, people fell face down and cried out, "The Lord -- He is God!"

1 Chronicles 21:16, people fell face down in prayer but they had the presence of mind to don sackcloth first.

Ezekiel 1:28, Ezekiel fell face down but could still hear. It does not follow that he passed out or fainted as he fell.

Daniel's experience (Daniel 10:7-9) is a unique experience in the Old Testament. It was similar to Ezekiel's experiences in some ways but was different in that he testified that he had no strength, he turned deathly pale and fell into a deep sleep, face down. (Note the consistency in the Old Testament on this issue, that the people always fell face down before the Lord, never, not even once, face up.) Daniel had just seen a vision of an angelic messenger. God, it would seem, caused a deep sleep to come upon him and in that condition spoke to him about the future events that would shape the world.

What are we to surmise out of the Old Testament experience? First, that people fell before the Lord for two basic reasons: (1) God initiated an encounter, an angel appeared to them (Samson's parents, Ezekiel, and Daniel) or a revelation was made clear through miraculous signs (the Israelites on Mt Carmel); (2) people searched God out because they felt the judgment of God upon themselves or upon others, or they sought out the Lord for other personal reasons. (In each of these situations we would acknowledge that God was really the One Who moved people to search Him out, so in that sense they also were initiated by God.)

Secondly, without exception, falling before the Lord was always face down, never falling back or falling face up. This alone should indicate for us that there was not a loss of consciousness.

Thirdly, only did Daniel seem to lose consciousness. But Daniel was a prophet and, since this experience stands alone in the Old Testament, it was not even normal for a prophet to lose consciousness.

### *Falling before the Lord in the New Testament*

In Jesus' earthly ministry many fell at his feet: a demoniac, a rich young ruler, and many devout people. From these examples, we can conclude that falling before the feet of Jesus was not necessarily an indication of commitment to his Lordship. The word most often used in the New Testament for falling is the Greek word *pipto* which means to fall, to fall upon, or to light upon.<sup>3</sup> Again, as with the Hebrew *naphal*, the word *pipto* is broad in its meaning and we require the context to understand. John 11:32 describes Mary falling at the feet of Jesus in her grief over the death of her brother Lazarus, but she spoke to the Lord. In fact, in all of the instances where someone fell at Jesus feet, there is not one that would suggest a loss of consciousness.

John 18:6 is a passage that is sometimes used to describe people falling before the Lord. It is an amazing event in biblical history where the soldiers came to arrest Jesus on the night of his betrayal. When Jesus said, "I am he," identifying himself for the arrest, the soldiers fell to the ground. Without any apparent pause, Jesus asked them again, "Who do you want?" We can at least surmise that they did not lose consciousness, neither did they have any outward spiritual change since they arrested Jesus immediately after that. Whether their falling was out of a mystical and awesome experience that occurred when Jesus said, literally, "I am," which is the name of God, or whether they simply fell back in a defensive position expecting a fight, we cannot know. But we are certain of these things. They did not lose consciousness. They were not

<sup>3</sup>Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words.

## Being "Slain in the Spirit" (Packer, 4 of 5)

"Falling Before the Lord" Page 4

converted. The Apostles never explained it.

Two peculiar experiences in the book of Acts which involve the use of the word *pipto* are Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11) and Eutychus (Acts 20:9). In these experiences Ananias and Sapphira fell down because they were dead and Eutychus died because he fell down from a considerable height. It helps us see the broad meaning attached to the word *pipto*.

Other passages which also depict a falling before the Lord include the following.

1 Corinthians 14:25, "fall down and worship God, exclaiming," indicates not a loss of consciousness but a conviction of the truth. Someone who faints will be unable to worship or exclaim. It helps us to see the Old Testament pattern of falling before the Lord, which Paul had in mind. When he said fall down and worship, he undoubtedly envisioned this voluntary, conscious falling before the Lord, face down, which we see in the Old Testament.

Acts 9:4, 22:7, Saul (Paul) fell to the ground at the vision of the resurrected Christ while on the road to Damascus. Acts 26:14 he states, "we all fell to the ground." No where is it suggested that Saul lost consciousness.

Acts 16:29, the Philippian jailer fell before Paul and Silas but could still speak and asked questions.

Revelation 1:17, John fell at the sight of the resurrected Christ as a dead man.

There are only three passages in all the Bible which suggest that there might have been a loss of consciousness in a moment of heightened spiritual experience: Daniel's experience (Daniel 8:15-27), Peter's experience (Acts 10:9-16), and John's experience (Revelation 1:17). In these experiences, all three have to do with significant revelations from God. Daniel and John were used of God to write about the future. Peter's experience was resolving the issue of Gentile conversion. All three of these men we would recognize as having been used of God's Spirit to write the Old and New Testament. We would call them prophets. It is interesting to note that these three experiences dealt with things which a human being would not have the ability in his own reason to see God's perspective on these things. Our natural reasoning leads us to remain fixed in our own prejudices about people and future events. God's revelation, in these situations, was so contrary to human reason, that He seems to have suspended or severely limited their thought processes for the benefit of receiving His revelation.

To take these experiences and thereby suggest that they are normative for today would be to do what the Bible did not. It was not even normative for a prophet. Never did the apostles recommend the experience nor even describe people falling before the Lord. In all of the great revivals of the book of Acts, no such incident occurred. (cf Acts 2:1-42, 46, 47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7; 9:35; 11:20,21; 12:24; 14:1; 19:17-20)

### Summary:

In this short Bible study I have sought to examine biblically the issue of falling before the Lord or "being slain in the spirit." As I have stated in my introduction, I do not believe this is an issue which by itself should lead churches to separate from one another. My concern is that practices such as this will detract us from the pure and simple spirituality which is presented in the Bible.

This issue, however, rarely stands alone. Often, when one thing is over emphasized, other minor teachings, or sometimes clear fabrications, are also given improper priority and prominence. The misinterpretation or improper emphasis on a relatively obscure or unclear teaching will often lead to a neglect of the more clear and weighty matters of the Bible. This may lead to a renewed legalism where, instead of obedience to laws being required, certain experiences are looked upon as normative or desirable. Whenever the church seeks an experience rather than seeking the Lord, a false, emotional spirituality is likely to flourish.

As with the Davenport experience, these practices seem to lend themselves to an overuse of "prophetic authority". The practices which we see today seem to emphasize this "pastoral authority" or "special anointing," and often power is claimed by individual ministers which belonged only to the Apostles. As with sacramentalism, which requires a sacerdotalism to sustain

**Being "Slain in the Spirit" (Packer, 5 of 5)**

"Falling Before the Lord" Page 5

it, a type of sacramentalism of experience with a corresponding sacerdotalism is represented here, which depends more on hearing the right preacher, being in the right meeting, or being physically touched in the right way, than it depends upon the biblical message and the Holy Spirit.

The practice today is typically like this. An "altar call" or "invitation" is given and individuals come forward. Among those who come forward will be some who will faint or fall down. Most of these fall backward as opposed to falling face down in the biblical pattern. In many groups, this happens when a minister touches the individual, or looks at them holding out his hand. Sometimes these individuals will faint when the leader blows upon them. These individuals lay there for sometime, it appears to vary from 1 minute to 15 minutes or sometimes longer, then awake.

It has always been my practice to offer invitations after preaching. I have been in many great meetings where the Spirit of the Lord was obviously present and moving and many people responded to the message. It has rarely occurred in my preaching that someone fainted or passed out, but when it has, I have always felt that it was a display which disrupted the sincere from responding. It called attention to the individual who swooned or fainted and distracted from the call to believe in Christ.

Being "slain in the spirit" or "falling before the Lord", where someone loses consciousness falls back to the ground or lays there, is a practice that is not founded upon the New Testament experience. It was not practiced in any of the churches in the New Testament. It was not introduced by Jesus nor by the Apostles, and certainly not encouraged by them. Not once in the Book of Acts is there any mention of it. The practice as we commonly see it today has no biblical precedent. It obviously suggests a heightened emotionalism and sensationalism that may falsely represent itself as truly spiritual and because of this it has potential to harm believers and the church. It influences Christians to seek an experience instead of seeking the Lord. It lends itself to the abuse of power in church leadership. As any addition to the New Testament faith is bound to do, it detracts from the Gospel and the need for personal faith in Christ. It confuses young Christians who may seek such an experience out of ignorance, and can rob them of the assurance of their salvation. It may falsely assure someone of a right relationship with Christ, when sins are yet unconfessed but yet "fainting" has been experienced.

Bowing or kneeling before the Lord in conscious prayer, laying prostrate in awe of His majesty and power, emotionally responding to the beauty of forgiveness, begging His mercy as we confess our sins, being overwhelmed by our sinfulness and His holiness, rejoicing in His grace, being still and quiet before the Lord as we listen to His Spirit move in our minds, being broken by His awesomeness, laying prostrate in recognition of His holiness and in submission to His will -- these are commendable practices. I would encourage all Christians and churches to emphasize these and to avoid becoming entangled in the false.

Jonathan Edwards noted five signs based on 1 John 4, to show when God is at work. First, God is at work when a person's esteem for the true Jesus is raised. Secondly, God is at work when Satan's kingdom is attacked. Thirdly, God is at work when the people come to love the Scripture more. Fourthly, God is at work when men are led away from falsehood into truth. Fifthly, God is at work when there is an increase in love for God and for man.<sup>4</sup> Such a movement, if it is of God, should leave upon our lives these attributes.

David Packer, Pastor  
International Baptist Church of Singapore  
March, 1994

---

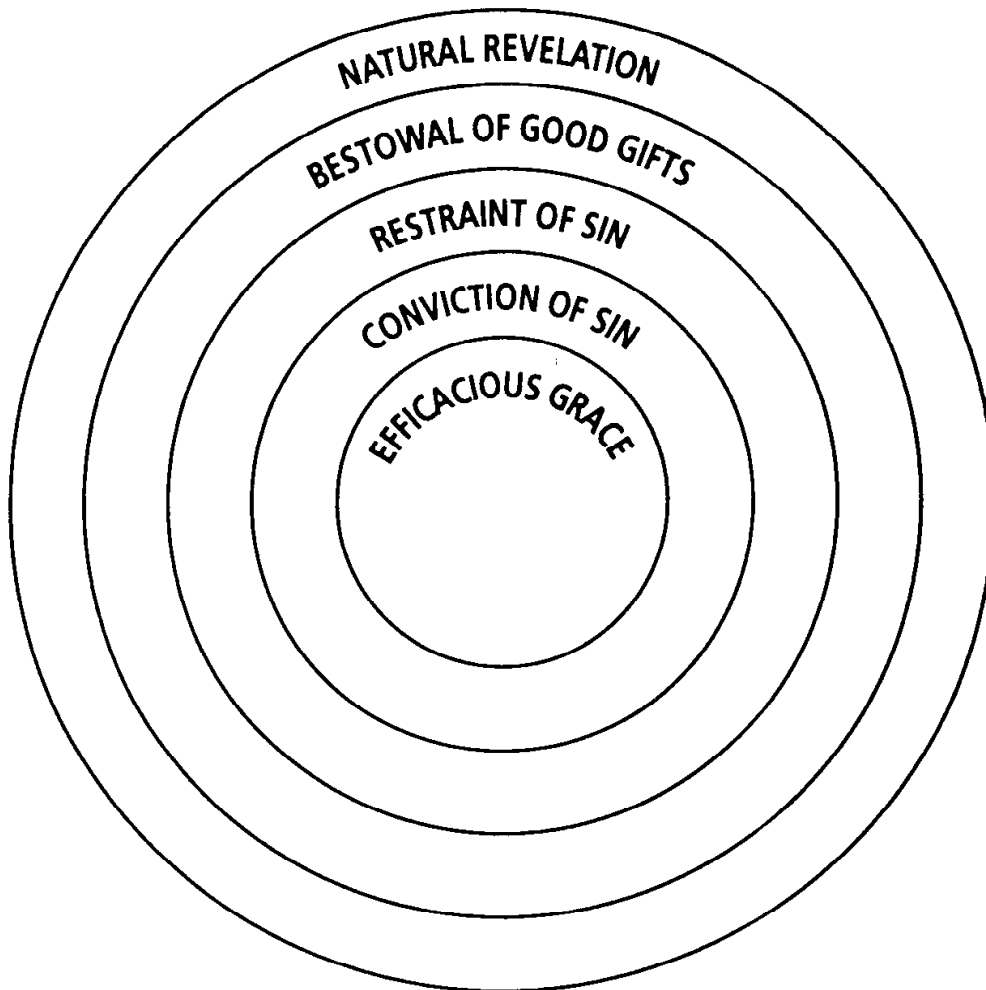
<sup>4</sup>Jonathan Edwards, *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 2 (Banner of Truth) p. 266-68.

## The Spirit & Grace

Adapted from Charles C. Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 2d ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1997), 75-76

	General Grace	Special Grace
<b>Basic Meaning</b>	Blessings from the Spirit which all people experience	Blessings from the Spirit which lead unbelievers to salvation
<b>Definition</b>	"The unmerited favor of God toward mankind displayed in His general care for them" (Ryrie, <i>The Holy Spirit</i> , 2d ed., 75)	"The work of the Holy Spirit which effectively moves men to believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour" (Ryrie, <i>The Holy Spirit</i> , 2d ed., 85)
<b>Spirit's Ministries</b>	Natural revelation (Rom. 1:18-20) Good gifts (Ps. 145:9) Restraint of sin (2 Thess. 2:6-7) Conviction of sin (John 16:8-11)	Call to Christ (Rom. 1:1; 8:28; 1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Pet. 1:3, 10)
<b>Former Name</b>	Common Grace	Efficacious Grace

### General Grace



SOURCE: Professor Manfred E. Kober, Faith Baptist College and Theological Seminary, Ankeny, Iowa 50021. Used by Permission.

Charles Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 2d ed., 77



## Other Ministries of the Spirit

Adapted from Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 1st ed., 104-7

### I. Teaching

- A. All truth is learned through the teaching ministry of the “Spirit of truth” (John 16:13a), even if teachers are involved (1 John 2:27), such as those with the gift of teaching (Rom. 12:7).
- B. He does not originate the message but teaches only what Christ wants (John 16:13b).
- C. The Spirit especially teaches prophecy (“things to come”) to willing believers (John 16:13c).
- D. He glorifies Christ in His teaching ministry (John 16:14-15). If the Holy Spirit receives the glory then something has gone amiss.

### II. Guiding (cf. p. xxiv)

- A. Being led by the Spirit is one of the signs of being a son of God (Rom. 8:14).
- B. The NT has many examples of His guidance (Acts 8:29; 10:19-20; 13:2, 4; 16:6-7; 20:22-23).
- C. How does the Spirit guide us?
  - 1. Bible
  - 2. Other believers
  - 3. Prayer

“The child of God need never be walking in the dark; he is always free to ask and receive directions from the Spirit Himself” (Ryrie, 1st ed., 105).
--

### III. Assuring

- A. “For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if [Gr. ‘since’] indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory” (Rom. 8:15-17).
  - 1. Highlight, circle, or underline all words above that assure you as a believer through the Holy Spirit that you are permanently saved and forever part of God’s family.
  - 2. *Heir* means we share in both the Father’s life (“children”) and possessions (“glory”).
- B. The Spirit Himself is our firstfruits (Rom. 8:23) and deposit of eternal blessings (2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14), which is very much in line with his sealing ministry (Eph. 1:13-14).

### IV. Praying

- A. “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 with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will” (Rom. 8:26-27; cf. p. xiii).
- B. The Spirit and Father are so united that the Spirit’s prayers need not be audible!
- C. What implications are here about praying to the Spirit rather than to the Father (see pp. xi-xiii)?

## Sins Against the Spirit

The following sins against the Holy Spirit are listed in order from the most severe to the least severe (yet also the least common to the most common):

<b>Sin</b>	<b>Key Text</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Blasphemy</b>	Matt 12:31-32	Disbelief in Christ to the point of attributing the work of the Spirit in Jesus to Satan	Pharisees and some (though few) unbelievers today
<b>Resisting</b>	Acts 7:51	Rejecting the clear drawing of the Spirit to salvation	Sanhedrin and other unbelievers
<b>Insulting</b>	Heb. 10:29	Deliberate rejection of God's grace following knowledge of the truth	Some Jewish believers who rejected Christ to return to Judaism
<b>Lying to</b>	Acts 5:3-4	Deliberate misrepresentation of facts for personal gain	Ananias, Sapphira, and any other Christian who lies to fellow believers in Christ
<b>Quenching</b>	1 Thess. 5:19	Seeking to suppress (lit. "throw water upon") the Spirit's leading within the body of Christ  = saying <u>no</u> when the Spirit says <u>yes</u>	Disrespect for spiritual authorities (vv. 12-13a), hampered relationships (vv. 13b-15), complaining (v. 16), prayerlessness (v. 17), ungratefulness (v. 18), despising genuine prophecies without testing them (vv. 20-21), all evils (v. 22)
<b>Grieving</b>	Eph. 4:30	Allowing something in one's life which is contrary to the holiness of the Spirit (Walvoord, 200)  = saying <u>yes</u> when the Spirit says <u>no</u>	Lying (v. 25), anger (vv. 26-27), stealing (v. 28), unwholesome talk (v. 29), bitterness, brawling, slander, malice (v. 31). Most of these relate to speech.



## The Eschatology of the Spirit

Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 2d ed., 188

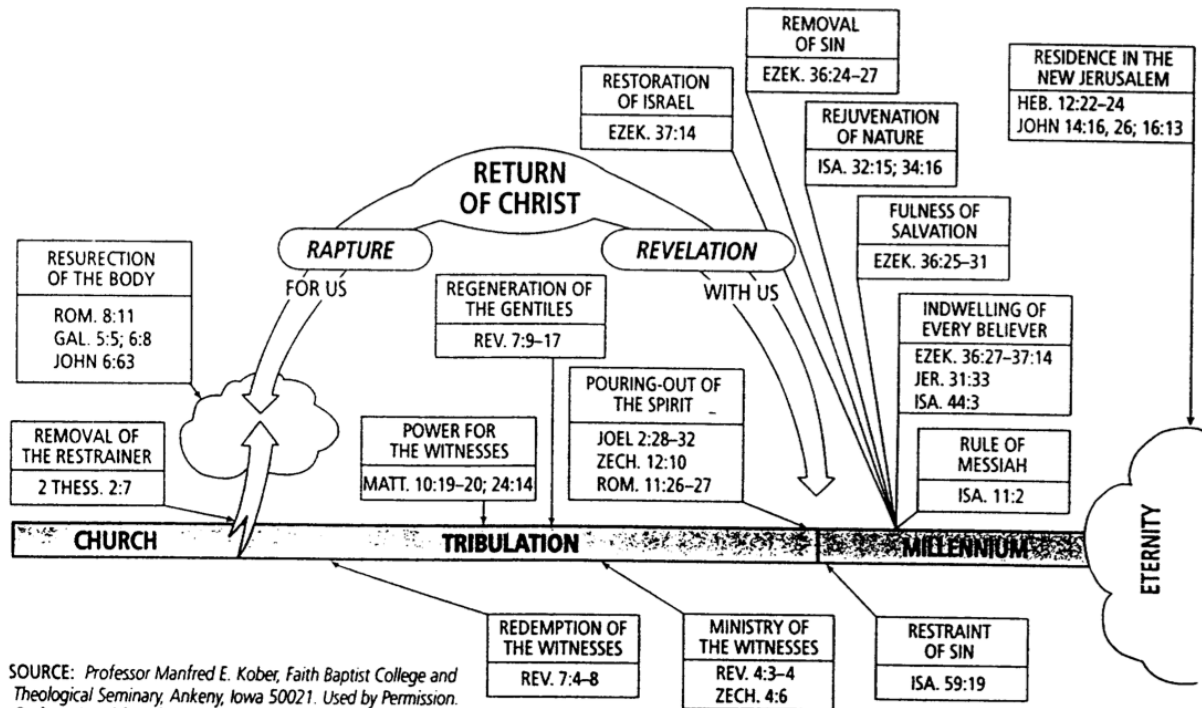


Figure 21.1.

## Fruit and Gifts of the Spirit Contrasted

Gifts	Fruit
Abilities	Christ-likeness
Relate to service	Relate to character
Means to an end	The end itself
What a Christian has	What a Christian is
Plural: many	Singular: one (love)
Often misused in the church	Rarely misused in the church
No believer possesses all	Every believer should strive for all
Will cease (temporary)	Will last (permanent)

## Fruit of the Spirit Defined

(cf. Galatians notes, 174f)

Most of us cannot recognize the type of tree we are looking at by seeing only its leaves and branches. But when we see fruit on it, identifying it is simple.

The same is true of Christians. The unmistakable fruit of God's Spirit in our lives is powerful evidence that one has truly trusted Christ. Galatians 5:22-23 notes that this fruit (singular) is love, but love includes the other eight traits as well...

Inner Life	Love	Unconditional and unselfish commitment to others; active service to them
	Joy	Deep happiness stemming from a personal relationship with God, including a sense of fulfilling His will
	Peace	Wholeness, tranquility of mind, sense of well-being, based on forgiveness
Social Relationships	Patience	Longsuffering, steadfastness, forbearance, willingness to wait for others like God waits for us
	Kindness	Excellence of character towards those of fragile nature in personality and need
	Goodness	Sense of ideal character, righteousness softened by love
Principles of Conduct	Faithfulness	Fidelity towards others, reliable since God is reliable towards us
	Gentleness	Meekness, tamed and trained, submissive to God's will and considerate to others
	Self-Control	Self-mastery, priority of others' concerns over selfish desires

## Fruit of the Spirit Compared

(cf. Galatians notes, 174g)

*"The fruit of the Spirit is love. . ."*

JOY is love's strength

PEACE is love's security

PATIENCE is love's endurance

KINDNESS is love's conduct

GOODNESS is love's character

FAITHFULNESS is love's confidence

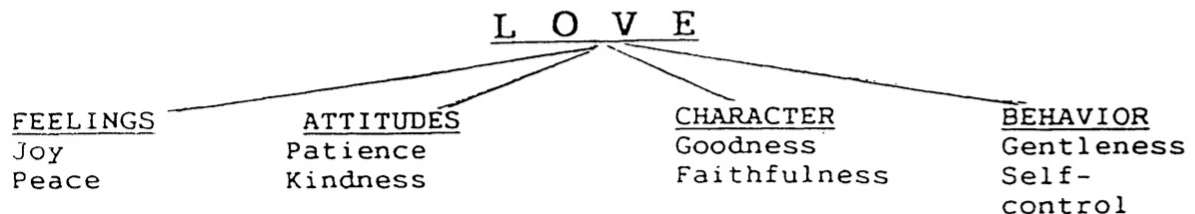
GENTLENESS is love's humility

SELF-CONTROL is love's victory

-----

JOY - LOVE EXALTED  
PEACE - LOVE IN REPOSE  
LONGSUFFERING - LOVE ENDURING  
GENTLENESS - LOVE BEING TENDER  
GOODNESS - LOVE SHOWING KINDNESS  
FAITHFULNESS - LOVE OVERCOMING  
MEEKNESS - LOVE IN SUBMISSION  
SELF-CONTROL - LOVE UNDER DISCIPLINE

-----



# Discerning & Using Your **Spiritual Gifts**



## Overview of the Sessions

\* Indicates Small Groups This Session

### PART I: INTRODUCTION

<b>Session #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Handout #</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1*			<b>Let's Talk About Some Basics</b>
		1	Objectives of the Sessions Names of Those in My Discussion Group Abbreviations Used in This Series
		2	Basic Issues in 1 Corinthians 12 Distinguishing Natural Talents From Spiritual Gifts
2			<b>So Why Are We Here Anyway?</b>
		3	The Basis and Nature of Spiritual Gifts Why Study and Know Our Gifts?
		4	Scriptural Commands Associated with Gifts
		5	Worksheet to Help List the Spiritual Gifts
3			<b>Listing the Spiritual Gifts</b>
		6	Lists of Spiritual Gifts in the New Testament
		7	Overview and Categorization of the Gifts Chart
		8	Abilities Sometimes Called Gifts
4*			<b>Various Views &amp; Spiritual Gift "Dangers"</b>
		9	Author Comparison Chart
		13	Dangers Associated With Spiritual Gifts

### PART II: TEMPORARY GIFTS

5*			<b>Introduction to the Temporary Gifts</b>
		14	Views on the Duration of Gifts
		16	Scriptural Support for Temporary Gifts
		19	Transitional Diagrams
6*			<b>Foundational Gifts: Part 1</b>
		20	Apostleship
		21	Word of Wisdom
		22	Word of Knowledge
7*			<b>Foundational Gifts: Part 2</b>
		23	Prophecy
		28	Distinguishing of Spirits
8*			<b>Sign Gifts: Part 1</b>
		29	Speaking in Tongues
		35	Interpretation of Tongues
9*			<b>Sign Gifts: Part 2</b>
		36	Miracles
		37	Healings
		42	Temporary Gift Study Guide

**PART III: PERMANENT GIFTS**

<b>Session #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Handout #</b>	<b>Topic</b>
------------------	-------------	------------------	--------------

10*			<b>Speaking Gifts: Part 1</b>
		43	Permanent Gift Study Guide
		44	Gifts & Ministries
		47	Speaking Gifts Comparison Chart
		49	Teaching
		50	Evangelism
11*			<b>Speaking Gifts: Part 2</b>
		52	Pastor-Teacher
		53	Encouragement
12*			<b>Serving Gifts: Part 1</b>
		54	Serving Gifts Comparison Chart
		55	Administration
		56	Faith
13*			<b>Serving Gifts: Part 2</b>
		57	Giving
		58	Service
		59	Showing Mercy

**PART IV: DISCERNING AND USING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

14			<b>Discerning Your Spiritual Gifts: Part 1</b>
		60	Spiritual Gifts Inventory
		65	How to Discern Your Spiritual Gifts
		44	How Many Gifts Does Each Believer Have?
		45	Problem Passages
15*			<b>Discerning Your Spiritual Gifts: Part 2</b>
		62	Spiritual Gifts Inventory Worksheet
		62	Spiritual Gifts Inventory Small Group Discussion
		64	Spiritual Gifts Inventory Explanatory Supplement
		66	Questions to Help Discern Your Gifts
		68	Ministry Opportunities at Our Church
16			<b>Using Your Spiritual Gifts</b>
		63	Spiritual Gifts Inventory Class Record
		70	Guidelines for Using Your Spiritual Gift (Swindoll)

## Objectives of the Sessions

- 1) Discover what spiritual gifts are, and learn their purpose for today and for the foundation of the Church in the first century.
- 2) Study each of the gifts in small groups and apply them to our lives individually whether they may be our gifts or not.
- 3) Learn how to detect spiritual gifts in others so that we can encourage them in these areas.
- 4) Take a spiritual gifts inventory to help discern which gifts may be our own gift(s).
- 5) Begin at least one new area of service for Christ related to our spiritual gift(s).

## Names of Those in My Discussion Group

<u>GROUP #1</u>	<u>GROUP #2</u>	<u>GROUP #3</u>	<u>GROUP #4</u>
-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------

## Abbreviations Used in This Series

All of these sources are good lexicons (dictionaries) for Greek word studies\*

BAGD	Bauer, Walter; Arndt, William F.; Gingrich, F. Wilbur; Danker, Frederick W. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1958; reprint ed., 1979.
Strong	Strong, Augustus. "Greek Dictionary." Thomas, Robert L., ed. <i>New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible</i> . Nashville, TN: Holman, 1981.
Thayer	Thayer, Joseph Henry. <i>Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament</i> . Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Corporation, 1962.
Vine	Vine, W. E. <i>An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words</i> . Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1940; reprint ed., 1966.

\* See the instructor of this series for the "Selected Annotated Bibliography," which explains each of these books and several others helpful in studying spiritual gifts.

## Basic Issues in 1 Corinthians 12

Answers on pages 129-130

DIRECTIONS: Read through the following questions about spiritual gifts (don't answer them yet), then look for the answers as someone in your group reads 1 Corinthians 12:1-18 aloud. Include the verses where each answer is found as your group answers each question.

- 1) **What** are spiritual gifts?

Note: Spiritual Gifts are Not:

- a) Place of Service
- b) Age Group Ministry
- c) Natural Talents

- 2) **Who** has spiritual gifts? Who gives spiritual gifts? Who decides the gift for each person?

The Involvement of the Whole Trinity (vv. 4-6):

God the \_\_\_\_\_ gives (distributes) the spiritual gifts (v. \_\_\_\_)

God the \_\_\_\_\_ assigns the place of the ministry of the gifts (v. \_\_\_\_)

God the \_\_\_\_\_ gives the energy operative through the gifts in the place of ministry (v. \_\_\_\_)

(Earl Radmacher, "Spiritual Gifts" tape, Campus Crusade for Christ)

- 3) **Where** are the spiritual gifts to be used?

- 4) **When** do Christians receive their spiritual gifts? (Must be deduced from vv. 7, 11, and 18)

- 5) **Why** are spiritual gifts given?

## Distinguishing Natural Talents from Spiritual Gifts

### Natural Talents

### Spiritual Gifts

Who has them?

How are they obtained?

When are they obtained?

Who benefits from them?

*The Real Issue: Does it really make any difference whether a believer thinks his ability is a natural talent or a spiritual gift? (\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_)*

\_\_\_\_ : We shouldn't add to God's Word by calling an ability a "spiritual gift" if the Bible doesn't call it a gift, but . . .

\_\_\_\_ : Both natural talents and spiritual gifts are:

- 1) given \_\_\_\_\_ God, and
- 2) to be used \_\_\_\_\_ God!!



## The Basis and Nature of Spiritual Gifts

### Greek words relating to Spiritual Gifts

Answers on page 131

- 1) **Charisma** (χάρισμα) is the most popular word for spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 1:7; 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6; 1 Pet. 4:10)  
Translations: "gift" or "spiritual gift" (1 Tim 4:14 only), but literally means "gifts of grace."  
  
Roots: \_\_\_\_\_ means \_\_\_\_\_ (The basis of receiving our spiritual gifts is grace)  
          \_\_\_\_\_ means \_\_\_\_\_ (The result of exercising our spiritual gift is joy)  
  
Other uses of the word *charisma* in the New Testament (Vine):  
a) gift of salvation (Rom. 5:15, 16; 6:23; 11:29)  
b) truth which is imparted through human instruction (Rom. 1:11)  
c) celibacy and marriage (1 Cor. 7:7)  
d) gracious deliverances in answer to the prayers of fellow believers (2 Cor. 1:11)
- 2) **Diakonia** (διακονία) refers to a place of service (1 Cor. 12:5) & category of gifts (1 Pet. 4:11).  
Translations: "service" (NIV), "ministries" (NASB)
- 3) **Energema** (ἐνέργημα) concerns the energy operating through the gifts (1 Cor. 12:6; Rom. 12:3)  
Translations: "working" (NIV), "effects" (NASB)
- 4) **Phanerosis** (φανέρωσις) denotes the evidence of the Spirit in believers (1 Cor. 12:7).  
Translations: "manifestation" (NASB, NIV)  
Infinitive: **phaneroein** (φανερόειν) "to make visible or known"  
Secular Usage: "disclosure, announcement" (BAGD; cf. 2 Cor. 4:2)
- 5) **Pneumatikoi** (πνευματικοί) refers to the Spirit as the Source of gifts (1 Cor. 12:1; 14:1)  
Translations: "spiritual gifts" (NASB), but a more literal translation would be "spiritual things,"  
"things of the Spirit," or simply "spirituals"  
Root: **pneuma** (πνεῦμα) "Spirit"
- 6) **Doma** (δῶμα) is a gift given by Christ only to the church after His Ascension (Eph. 4:7-8, 11), not during the Old Testament (i.e., only Christians have gifts, not Old Testament saints).

## Why Study and Know Our Gifts?

- 1) **MINISTRY TO THE CHURCH BODY** - Ministering in the area of our gifts results in:
  - a) edification of the body—\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor. 14:12).
  - b) mobilizing the church for \_\_\_\_\_ to a lost world.
  - c) encouraging other believers to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ their gifts.
- 2) **PERSONAL FULFILLMENT** - Exercising our gifts results in:
  - a) ministering in areas of \_\_\_\_\_, reducing frustration and wasted time.
  - b) assisting us in establishing \_\_\_\_\_ for study, growth, and ministry (Eph. 4:13).
  - c) a sense of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:14-17).
- 3) **OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD** - Scripture gives several commands relating to gifts:
  - a) "Do not \_\_\_\_\_ the spiritual gift within you..." (1 Tim 4:14a).
  - b) "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be \_\_\_\_\_" (1 Cor. 12:1).
  - c) "And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given us, let us \_\_\_\_\_ them accordingly..." (Rom. 12:6a).
  - d) "As each one has received a special gift, \_\_\_\_\_ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 4:10).

## Scriptural Commands Associated With Gifts

Although God has gifted certain members of the Body of Christ with particular gifts, this does not imply that each believer should serve **only** in his or her "gifted" area. Scripture also commands **every** believer to minister to others in "non-gifted" capacities that may normally function under another's gift. Some examples are cited below.

### Associated Spiritual Gift

### Command Given to All Believers

Teaching

"Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another..." (Col. 3:16a)

Evangelism

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19)

Pastor-Teacher

"Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, looking to yourselves, lest you too be tempted" (Gal. 6:1)

Exhortation

"But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness" (Heb. 3:13a)

Administration

"But let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner" (1 Cor. 14:40)

Faith

"And without faith it is impossible to please Him..." (Heb. 11:6a)

Giving

"On the first day of the week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come" (1 Cor. 16:2)

Service

"... Serve one another in love (Gal. 5:13)

Showing Mercy

"And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (Col. 3:12)

## Spiritual Gifts Lists Worksheet

(cf. Romans notes, 155ff)

**DIRECTIONS:** List in the vertical columns the scriptural names of all of the spiritual gifts found in the six Scripture passages below, putting the gifts listed in more than one passage side by side horizontally, but in their respective columns. Then derive the total list of *all* the gifts, listing them in the left hand column. *Warning:* Different names may refer to the same gift in different passages! Then designate which (if any) gifts you believe are no longer in existence today.

All the Gifts	1 Pet. 4:10-11	Rom. 12:6-8	Eph 4:11	1 Cor. 12:28	1 Cor. 12:29-30	1 Cor. 12:8-10
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						

How many  
gifts are  
there? \_\_\_\_\_

How many  
gifts exist  
today? \_\_\_\_\_

## Lists of Spiritual Gifts in the New Testament

(cf. Ephesians PPT, slide 41)

New Testament Gift Lists						
Permanent { Speaking 1 Pet. 4:11a Serving 1 Pet. 4:11b Foundational Eph. 2:20 Sign Heb. 2:4         } Temporary	Gifts (All)	Rom 12:6-8	Eph 4:11	1 Cor 12:28	1 Cor 12:29-30	1 Cor 12:8-10
	Teaching	Teaching		Teaching	Teaching	
	Evangelism		Evangelists			
	Pastor-Teacher		Pastor-Teachers			
	Exhortation	Exhortation				
	Administration			Administration		
	Faith					Faith
	Giving	Giving				
	Service	Service		Helping		
	Showing Mercy	Mercy				
	Apostleship		Apostles	Apostles	Apostles	
	Wisdom					Wisdom
	Knowledge					Knowledge
	Prophecy	Prophecy	Prophets	Prophecy	Prophecy	Prophecy
	Discerning Spirits					Discerning Spirits
	Tongues			Tongues	Tongues	Tongues
	Interpretation				Interpretation	Interpretation
	Miracles			Miracles	Miracles	Miracles
	Healings			Healings	Healings	Healings



## Abilities Sometimes Called Gifts

Several authors of books on spiritual gifts maintain that some abilities are indeed spiritual gifts which this series does not refer to as gifts. It seems that the important question to ask is: "How would you know whether an ability was a spiritual gift or not? By what criteria would you judge?" Undoubtedly, the surest basis on which to make such a distinction is simply whether the Bible designates an ability as a spiritual gift or not. Several passages of Scripture list the gifts for us but the abilities addressed on this handout appear in none of these lists. Nevertheless, the following abilities are still called gifts by various authors:

**Hospitality** is sometimes designated a spiritual gift based upon 1 Peter 4:9, "Be hospitable to one another without complaint (NASB)." Leslie Flynn writes,

Though hospitality is not included in any of Paul's lists of gifts, the context in which hospitality is mentioned seems to earn it consideration as a separate gift. After Peter speaks of hospitality in verse 9, he immediately goes on in the next two verses to say that whatever gift a person has should be faithfully exercised. The link in Peter's thinking between hospitality and gifts strongly implies that hospitality is a gift... The gift of hospitality is that supernatural ability to provide open house and warm welcome for those in need of food and lodging (Flynn, 104).

However, it should also be noted that while hospitality is mentioned in the context of spiritual gifts, so are several other commands such as being of a sound mind for prayer (v. 7) and loving one another (v. 8). To be consistent, Flynn's logic would lead to a teaching regarding the gifts of "prayer" and "loving!" Rather, Peter's argument flows from addressing the church as a whole (vv. 7-9) to addressing individuals in light of their spiritual gifts. The command to be hospitable applies to the entire church (cf. Matt. 25:35; Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:2), not only to those with a "gift of hospitality." It would be better to see this ability as functioning under the gift of service as an ability some have to meet the practical needs of others by especially using their home.

**Craftsmanship** is listed as a gift by Yohn (pp. 19, 20) who cites that those enabled by God to design and construct the tabernacle had this "gift" (Exod. 31:1-11). Among those so gifted Yohn lists the silversmith, goldsmith, coppersmith, stonemason, jeweler, carpenter, cabinetmaker, tailor, dressmaker, designer, interior decorator, engineer, draftsman, artist, and mechanic! However, these abilities seem to be natural talents which God bestows to be used in conjunction with the gift of service. Those with the gift of service willingly and joyfully serve to meet practical needs through their talents. Yohn admits that this ability is not mentioned in the New Testament.

**Music** was a gift possessed by both David and Solomon, according to Rick Yohn (pp. 103-108). He cites six different Old Testament uses of this gift: instrumentalists (2 Chron. 34:12), singers (1 Chron. 15:19), composers (2 Chron. 29:30), choir directors (Neh. 29:30), music instructors (1 Chron. 15:22), and instrument makers (2 Chron. 7:6; 29:26, 27). Yohn's New Testament "examples" of the gift (1 Cor. 14:26; Col. 3:16) in context are not really gifts at all, but commands for the entire church to sing. Musical talent is an ability that God may use with several different gifts: teaching, exhortation, evangelism, service, etc.

**Other Abilities** labeled "gifts" (all by Wagner) include celibacy (1 Cor. 7:7, 32-34), voluntary poverty (1 Cor. 13:3), martyrdom (1 Cor. 13:3; Acts 7:60), intercession, exorcism (pp. 262, 263), and ability to remember names (pp. 73, 74)! However, 1 Corinthians 7:7 infers that *both* celibacy and marriage are blessings from God for different individuals, and 1 Corinthians 13:3 better describes the ultimate expressions of the gift of giving. Wagner considers the list of gifts endless, simply confusing the distinctions between natural talents and gifts.

# Author Comparison Chart

## Author Comparison Chart

Various Theological Positions on the Listing and Categorization of Spiritual Gifts\*  
Compiled by Rick Griffith

	LESLE B. FLYNN 19	BILL GOTHARD 7	BILLY GRAHAM 15	WILLIAM McRAE 18	EARL RADMACHER 15 or 17	CHARLES SWINDOLL 16	C. PETER WAGNER 30+
PERMANENT GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT	Preaching Teaching Evangelism Shepherding Exhortation Word of Knowledge Word of Wisdom Missionary Discernment Government Faith Giving Helps Hospitality Showing Mercy	min Prophecy/min/man Teaching/min min min min Exhortation man man Administration/min man man Giving Serving/min Mercy	Apostleship Prophecy Teaching Evangelism Pastoring Knowledge Wisdom Disc. of Spirits Governments Faith Helps/Mercy Mercy/Helps Tongues Interpretation Miracles Healing	Teaching Evangelism Pastor-Teacher Exhortation Admin./Ruling Faith Giving Service/Helps Showing Mercy	Preaching/min Teaching min min Exhortation Utterance of Know. Utterance of Wisdom Discernment Admin./Governments Ruling (Vision) Faith (Vision) Giving Helps/Showing Mercy Showing Mercy/Helps Public Service	Teaching Evangelism Pastor-Teacher Exhortation Admin./Leading Faith Giving Serving/Helping Showing Mercy	Apostle Prophecy Teaching Evangelist Pastor Exhortation Knowledge Wisdom Missionary Discerning of Spirits Administration Leadership Faith Giving Helps Service Hospitality Mercy Tongues Interpretation of Tongues Miracles Healing Cellbacy Voluntary Poverty Martyrdom Intercession Exorcism Music Craftsmanship (Remembering) Names
TEMPORARY GIFTS	Apostolic Prophecy Miracles		Apostleship Wisdom Knowledge Prophecy Distinguishing of Spirits Tongues Interpretation Miracles Healings	min Prophecy/min Tongues Interpretation Miracles Healing		Apostleship Prophecy Distinguishing of Spirits Tongues Interpretation Miracles Healings	

\*NOTE: This chart is an objective attempt to compare the teachings on spiritual gifts from the viewpoints of seven evangelical authors (all non-Charismatic). However, gifts listed across the chart horizontally do not necessarily have the same definitions by the various authors. Definitions of the following gifts differ most among the authors: apostleship, prophecy, knowledge, wisdom, discernment, and tongues.

### SOURCES AND AFFILIATIONS:

1. Flynn, Leslie B. 19 Gifts of the Spirit (Conservative Baptist; Pastor)
2. Gothard, Bill "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift" (Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts; Instructor)
3. Graham, Billy The Holy Spirit (Billy Graham Evangelistic Association; Evangelist)
4. McRae, William The Dynamics of Spiritual Gifts (Dallas Seminary)
5. Radmacher, Earl "Spiritual Gifts" (tape series) (Western Conservative Baptist Seminary; President)
6. Swindoll, Charles "Spiritual Gifts That Edify the Body of Christ" (article) and "Spiritual Gifts" (tape series) (Dallas Seminary; Pastor, Author, Radio Speaker)
7. Wagner, C. Peter Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow (Fuller Seminary; Instructor, Church Growth Expert, Author)

**Author Comparison Chart Endnotes**

1. Both Flynn and Radmacher teach that although prophecy ceased in the first century, the gift exists today as the "gift of preaching." Flynn classifies it under the speaking gifts category. Radmacher sees it as a ministry, not a spiritual gift ("Spiritual Gifts" tape, Campus Crusade for Christ).
2. Flynn suggests that the apostolic gift was a speaking gift foundational in nature (ceased in the first century), but that its modern equivalent continues today as the "gift of missionary" (p. 38). Both Gothard and Graham designate those sent out by the church for ministry as modern "apostles."
3. Flynn and Wagner consider "hospitality" as a separate gift because Peter's exhortation to "be hospitable to one another without complaint" (1 Pet. 4:9) is immediately followed by an encouragement for them to employ their gifts in serving one another (1 Pet. 4:10-11). Wagner defines the gift as "the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to provide open house and warm welcome for those in need of food and lodging" (Wagner, 263).
4. Gothard categorizes the gifts threefold ("How to Identify Spiritual Gifts," 1):  
  
7 **Motivation Gifts** in Romans 12:6-8 (defined as "unique 'energizings' of the Holy Spirit within a believer which give that believer the desire and the power to concentrate on a particular aspect of spiritual concern")  
  
10 **Ministry Gifts** in Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28 (defined as "opportunities for recognized Christian service through the church")  
  
9 **Manifestation Gifts** in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 (defined as "supernatural results of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives and also in the lives of those to whom we minister")
5. Whereas it looks like there are five gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11, "actually there are only four, because the last two constitute a single gift [pastor-teacher]. The word 'and' [kai] which joins "pastors and teachers" is an entirely different word from the other four occurrences of the word 'and' [de] in this verse. This indicates that it may be taken as a hyphen. Also the word 'some' occurs four times; it precedes the word "pastors" but it does not precede the word "teachers" (Zuck, pp. 7-8). Although this indicates that this is a "dual" gift, Graham and Wagner both divide the gift into separate gifts of "pastoring" and "teaching."
6. Graham makes no mention of the gifts of exhortation or giving in his book, *The Holy Spirit*. The assumption, then, may be that he is not convinced of their validity or importance.
7. "Helps *is* the gift of showing mercy" (Graham, 135). [Italics mine.]
8. The listing/categorization of the gifts in this spiritual gifts series follows that of Bill McRae.
9. McRae (p. 86) and Radmacher ("Spiritual Gifts" tape, Campus Crusade for Christ) consider the mentioning of "speaking" and "serving" in 1 Peter 4:10-11 as references not to individual gifts, but to two general categories of gifts. I agree.
10. Radmacher ("Spiritual Gifts" tape, Campus Crusade for Christ), like Gothard ("Understanding Your Spiritual Gifts", 5), does not consider the titles in Ephesians 4:11 as references to gifts, but rather to offices. He says, "There are professionals in the ministry: apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers" (Radmacher, "Spiritual Gifts," tape, Campus Crusade for Christ).
11. "I take it that there are a total of 15 or 17 [gifts] depending on how you divide those two [helps/showing mercy and governments/ruling]" (Radmacher, "Spiritual Gifts" tape, Campus Crusade for Christ).



12. "The gift of administration...is called 'ruling' in Romans 12 and...'governments' in 1 Corinthians 12. You may make one or two out of that. They're very similar though there is a distinction" (Radmacher, "Spiritual Gifts" tape, Campus Crusade for Christ).
13. "The gift of helps...is called 'showing mercy' in Romans...You may make them one or you may make them two. They're very similar" (Radmacher, "Spiritual Gifts" tape, Campus Crusade for Christ).
14. "[Public service is] the gift which is being demonstrated in Acts chapter 6 by those men called 'deacons'" (Radmacher, "Spiritual Gifts" tape, Campus Crusade for Christ ).
15. Chuck Swindoll (p. 2), Charles Ryrie (pp. 83-92), and John Walvoord (pp. 38-54) all agree to the number and nature of these gifts. Therefore, this column also portrays the positions of both Ryrie and Walvoord as well.
16. "'Word of knowledge' and 'speaking' [are] most likely linked to [teaching]" (Swindoll, 2).
17. "'Word of wisdom' [is] linked to this gift [apostleship]" (Swindoll, 2).
18. Wagner does not choose to categorize the gifts.
19. Wagner defines the gift of apostleship as "the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to assume and exercise general leadership over a number of churches with an extraordinary authority in spiritual matters that is spontaneously recognized and appreciated by those churches" (Wagner, 261). He cites Chuck Smith of the Calvary Chapel movement based in Costa Mesa, California as an example (pp. 209-210).
20. Wagner is the only author on the chart who clearly defines "administration" ("governments") and "leadership" ("ruling") as separate gifts:

**Administration:** "the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to understand clearly the immediate and long range goals of a particular unit of the Body of Christ and to devise and execute effective plans for the accomplishment of those goals" (Wagner, 262).

**Leadership:** "the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to set goals in accordance with God's purpose for the future and to communicate these goals to others in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish those goals for the glory of God" (Wagner, 260, 262).

21. Wagner is the only author on the chart who defines "helps" and "service" as separate gifts:

**Helps:** "the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to invest the talents they have in the life and ministry of other members of the Body, thus enabling the person helped to increase the effectiveness of his or her spiritual gifts" (Wagner, 262).

**Service:** "the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to identify the unmet needs involved in a task related to God's work, and to make use of available resources to meet those needs and help accomplish the desired goals" (Wagner, p. 259).

22. Wagner cites the following Scriptural support for these gifts: celibacy (1 Cor. 7:7, 32-34), voluntary poverty (1 Cor. 13:3), and martyrdom (1 Cor. 13:3; Acts 7:60). In reference to the "gift of martyrdom" he candidly writes, "...it is the only gift you use only once! But it is broader...an attitude toward suffering and death that is quite unusual" (Wagner, 67).
23. Wagner suggests no Scriptural support for these gifts, but writes, "Are all the gifts mentioned in the Bible? Because none of the three primary lists is complete, and the three lists together are not complete, it is reasonable to conclude that the list of all the gifts mentioned in the Bible... may not be complete either... This is what I mean by an open-ended approach to the gifts. I do not doubt that there are even more than 27 of them. Some might want to add the gift of music and make it 28 or craftsmanship and make it 29. I ran into another gift recently which might be

called the 'gift of names.' Jerry Falwell, pastor of the renowned Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia, is extraordinary in many ways. But one of them is that he knows the names of most of his 16,000 members! In fact, he can speak in another city, meet people afterwards, go back a year later, and remember the majority of the people by name. He himself says, 'I have to give God the credit for this... It's a gift from God'" (Wagner, 73-74).

24. Flynn classifies four gifts under two categories: tongues and interpretation as both speaking and signifying gifts, and miracles and healing as both serving and signifying gifts (p. 32).
25. Very few (if any) Charismatic authors have written books and articles dealing with all the spiritual gifts. Most Charismatic material addresses only the gifts of prophecy, tongues, distinguishing of spirits, miracles, and healing; therefore, a complete representation of a Charismatic viewpoint is not reflected on the chart. Wagner's column probably comes closest to the views of most Charismatics although he does not claim to be Charismatic himself.

## Dangers Associated with Spiritual Gifts

### Attitudes and Actions to Avoid

Answers on page 132

- 1) Division resulting from \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - a) Viewing your gift as \_\_\_\_\_ (a problem of inferiority).  
i.e., "\_\_\_\_\_ gift is not like \_\_\_\_\_!" (1 Cor. 12:15-16).
  - b) Viewing your gift as \_\_\_\_\_ (a problem of pride).  
i.e., "\_\_\_\_\_ gift is not like \_\_\_\_\_!" (1 Cor. 12:21).
- 2) Confusion with \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 3) Seeking \_\_\_\_\_ (controversial) gifts while neglecting \_\_\_\_\_ gifts.
- 4) Seeking \_\_\_\_\_ ministering gifts while neglecting \_\_\_\_\_ ministering gifts.
- 5) Willing to be \_\_\_\_\_ of spiritual gifts because of the subject's complexity and the widely varying views of respected scholars (1 Cor. 12:1).
- 6) Focusing upon \_\_\_\_\_ as a more significant evidence of the Holy Spirit than the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).  
"Doing" overemphasized to the neglect of "\_\_\_\_\_."  
"Service" overemphasized to the neglect of "\_\_\_\_\_."
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_ opportunities for service in "\_\_\_\_\_ " areas because you don't have that particular gift which would make the service easier on you (2 Tim 4:5).
- 8) Supposing that spiritual gifts are \_\_\_\_\_ for service, for holiness, for sincerity, for maturity, or for anything else!
- 9) Believing that there is any correspondence between spiritual gifts and \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 10) Supposing that God has \_\_\_\_\_ your spiritual gift because He has not chosen to use it at the present time.  
"for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom. 11:29).
- 11) Seeking \_\_\_\_\_ and overlooking \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom. 12:9ff.; 1 Cor. 13:1ff.).  
"By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ " (John 13:35).

## Views on the Duration of Gifts

**The Nature of the Debate:** Have any of the spiritual gifts disappeared since the first century?

**The Various Views:** There are three major views regarding this question. My own responses to some of the arguments are in brackets [ ], and other rebuttals are in section 3.

### **1. Some Cite Arguments that No Gifts Passed Away (Non-Cessationist)** **(i.e., all gifts are permanent):**

- a. The argument that some gifts passed away begins with Scripture (the temporary nature of apostleship) but then moves into deductions from Scripture [but see pages 16-18].
- b. The Bible does not state that any gift has passed away [but see pages 16-18].
- c. The Bible never says divine authentication of the preaching of the gospel was needed only in apostolic times [true, but this was the biblical pattern. See 3.a. below and 2 Cor. 12:12].
- d. The "dramatic" and "less dramatic" gifts appear side-by-side in Scripture (1 Cor. 12:28) [but this neither argues for nor against cessationism—all gifts were present then].
- e. The supernatural was the norm in the early church (book of Acts), so why not today also? [But why assume God must work in the same way in all ages? This hasn't been His pattern throughout Scripture, so why expect it to remain the same from NT times to the present?]
- f. The epistles say much about gifts but never tell us how to phase them out [but this is not our job].
- g. In 1 Corinthians 13:8-13, Paul looks forward not to the passing of the apostolic age but to the final glorious fulfillment of the promises of God [but see pages 16-18].
- h. The decline in supernatural activity in the second to nineteenth centuries was due not to the passing away of certain gifts, but due to the unfaithfulness and lack of spiritual vitality in the church as a whole [such reasoning would argue that the most carnal NT church, Corinth, wouldn't have any gifts, which is not true at all (1 Cor. 1:7)].
- i. Resistance to miracles during the Reformation and today reacts to the crude religious magic of the medieval church and is an expression of rationalism (cf. Wimber, *Power Evangelism*). [But 1 John 4:1 commands us to be rational by testing the spirits to see if they are of God.]
- j. The theory that some gifts disappeared means that the experiences of some sincere and godly Christians today are counterfeit [but sincerity and godliness do not guarantee orthodoxy, as seen both in Scripture (e.g., Peter in Gal. 2:1-10) and church history (e.g., Jonathan Edwards' disbelief in original sin, Luther the Monk on salvation before being saved)].
- k. Supernatural gifts are being claimed by Christians in many different traditions today, sometimes in the most unusual of places. Therefore, God has not abandoned His people. [But supernatural abilities are given by Satan as well as by God (2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:13), so widespread miracles may indicate the closeness of Christ's return (Matt. 24:24).]
- l. Paul told the Corinthians that they would be gifted until the Lord's return: "You are not lacking any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:7).

### **2. Some Cite Arguments That All Gifts Passed Away (Total Cessationist)** **(i.e., all gifts were temporary):**

- a. The disappearance of the miraculous gifts after the first century can also apply to all the gifts [but Scripture does not indicate that all the gifts ceased].
- b. The NT emphasis is not upon *finding* our gift (a 20th century mindset) but upon correctly using the gift that we *know* we have [yes, but this doesn't indicate a cessation of all gifts].

- c. The qualifications for church leaders in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 deal primarily with spiritual character rather than spiritual abilities [true, but while ability is less important than character, it still plays a vital role in church life, even if it doesn't in leadership selection].
- d. Signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts in Hebrews 2:4 all confirmed the apostolic message, then passed away. The word for "gifts" (μερίσμοις, "distributions, apportionments") is a general word, broadening the gift activity beyond the miraculous gifts in Acts 2 [but see 3.i. below].
- e. The New Testament emphasizes obeying the *commands* of Scripture more than using gifts [true, but this does not argue for the disappearance of all the gifts].
- f. The fruit of the Spirit has precedence over gifts [yes, but they're not mutually exclusive].

**3. Some Cite Arguments that Some Gifts Passed Away (Partial Cessationist)**  
**(i.e., some gifts were temporary and some permanent):**

- a. The biblical pattern for miracles was to authenticate God's messengers (re: 1.c.).
- b. The reason NT writers did not distinguish between "dramatic" and "less dramatic" gifts as we do today is because they lived when miracles were the norm in the church (re: 1.d.).
- c. The book of Acts cannot be considered the norm for the church in all areas, especially since it covered a critical transition period in God's plan (re: 1.e.).
- d. The reason the epistles do not tell us how to "phase out" gifts is because "phasing out" the spiritual gifts is not the believer's responsibility but God's (re: 1.f.).
- e. The absence of the miracles from the second to nineteenth centuries is not related to gifts—miracles today can still be performed by God apart from any spiritual gift (re: 1.h.).
- f. Even sincere, godly Christians can be deceived into holding experiences above the Word of God. The spirituality of a believer is not the best test of doctrinal integrity (re: 1.j.).
- g. Deception is universal with most "miracles" unverified in distant places. Why can't miracle workers empty hospitals where God could receive the most glory for the healings (re: 1.k.)?
- h. Teaching the spiritual gifts does not necessarily imply that gifts are more important than character (re: 2.c.) or scriptural commands (re: 2.e.). All three are necessary. Balance!
- i. The word for "gifts" in Hebrews 2:4 can just as easily apply to the temporary, non-miraculous gifts as they can to *all* spiritual gifts. Some of these non-miraculous gifts are elsewhere indicated as foundational in nature, therefore being temporary (e.g., prophecy in Ephesians 2:20; re: 2.d.).
- j. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 indicates that prophecy, knowledge and tongues will disappear before the church body matured under the ministry of the apostles (re: 1.g.; see pages 16-17).
- k. It argues too much to say 1 Corinthians 1:7 teaches all gifts until the Lord's return. The verse speaks of the present situation in Corinth in light of the imminent return of the Lord, without reference to the distant future. To argue for a distant future one would also have to conclude that this church would exist in Corinth until the Lord's return.
- l. Ephesians 2:20 and Revelation 22:18-19 both provide evidence for the temporary nature of apostleship and prophecy (see page 18).

NOTE: The best arguments for temporary gifts are explained more in the next three pages.

## Scriptural Support for Temporary Gifts

(cf. 1 Corinthians notes, 161b-c)

NOTE: The next two pages may be the most technical in the entire series as they deal with some very difficult passages. So hold your hat! They are essentially a summary of Robert L. Thomas, "Tongues...Will Cease," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 17 (1974): 81-89.

**1 Corinthians 13:8-13** indicates that the "partial" (spiritual gifts of prophecy, knowledge, and tongues) will be done away with before the "perfect" (NASB) comes. However, what is meant by the "perfect?" This word (*to teleion*) can mean "complete," "perfect," or "mature" so three major views exist, viewing *to teleion* as:

Crucial Questions	Canon (Bible)	Rapture	Body (Church)
13:8 What is the nature of:			
a) prophecy & knowledge?	revelatory	non-revelatory	revelatory
b) tongues?	confirmatory	non-confirmatory	confirmatory
When do these gifts cease?	with canon	at Christ's coming	with canon
13:10 What is <i>to teleion</i> ?	the "complete" (the canon)	the "perfect" (Christ's coming)	the "mature" (the body)
13:11 What does growth to manhood represent?	before and after completed canon	before and after Christ's coming	before and after body's maturity (indicated by canon)
13:12 What are partial and full sight and knowledge?	before and after completed canon	before and after Christ's coming	before and after body's maturity (completed by <i>parousia</i> )

1. **The Canon View** sees *to teleion* as "the complete, the totality," referring to "the completed Scriptures." Therefore, prophecy, knowledge, and tongues ceased before the New Testament was finished and no longer exist today.

### Strengths

- Revelational knowledge context (vv. 8-9).
- Confirmatory nature of tongues (cf. 14:22).
- Contrasts with partial nature of prophecy and knowledge.
- to teleion* often means "complete."
- "Complete" best contrasts "partial" (v. 10).

### Weaknesses

- Unreconcilable with Christ's coming (the *parousia*) in verse 12.
- The context does not refer to a completed New Testament. It's also doubtful that Paul ever envisioned one.
- "The whole" (*to ek pantos*) better contrasts "partial" than *to teleion* in that both are quantitative.

2. **The Rapture View** sees *to teleion* as "the perfect" (as opposed to "the complete" above), referring to the coming of Christ at the Rapture. Therefore, prophecy, knowledge and tongues will cease only when Christ comes and exist today as legitimate gifts.

### Strengths

- a. Adequately explains "knowing fully" in verse 12.
- b. "Face to face" (v. 12) well describes seeing Christ at His coming (cf. 1 Cor. 1:7) and has OT parallels to seeing God personally.
- c. "Perfect" well describes the condition at the *parousia* (Rapture).
- d. *to teleion* often means "perfect" in secular, philosophical Greek (e.g. Plato) as well as James 3:2.

### Weaknesses

- a. Inadequately explains the gradual maturing development of verse 11.
- b. Fails to recognize the distinctions between the revelatory nature of prophecy and knowledge and the confirmatory nature of tongues (cf. 14:22).
- c. Paul never uses *to teleion* as "the perfect" in the absolute sense.
- d. "Perfect" (a qualitative term) poorly contrasts "partial" (a quantitative term, v. 10).

3. **The Body View** sees *to teleion* as "the mature," referring to the maturity of the body of Christ. "It pictures the Christian church collectively, growing up as one body, beginning with its birth, progressing through different stages of development during the present [relative maturity, v. 11] and reaching maturity at the *parousia* [ultimate maturity, v. 12; Thomas, 86]." By using the ambiguous term *to teleion* Paul left open two possibilities, the church being: (1) relatively complete at the completion of the New Testament or (2) ultimately complete at Christ's return. This view ultimately comes to the same conclusion as the Canon View.

### Strengths

- a. Parallel 1 Cor. passages contrast *to teleion* (meaning "mature") with "babes, child" (νήπιος; 2:6 & 3:1; 14:20; cf. Heb. 5:13-14).
- b. Consistent with both the relative maturity of v. 11 and the absolute maturity of v. 12.
- c. Best fits the "body and gifts context" of 1 Cor. 12-14 and similar to Eph. 4:1-16.
- d. Has the same strengths of a., b., & c. in the Canon View.

### Weaknesses

- a. "Mature" (a qualitative term) poorly contrasts "partial" (a quantitative term, v. 10).
- b. Assigns a double sense for *to teleion* which may be unlikely.

**Implications of the Body View:** While this is a difficult text, the Body View has the least problems. There is no NT evidence that Paul knew which would come first: Christ's coming or the completion of the canon (as the Old Testament was complete). His use of the somewhat ambiguous term *to teleion* would allow room for either possibility: the completion of the canon or the Rapture.

However, Paul *did* recognize that the church would be progressing in maturity during the period of direct revelation and miraculous authentication (represented by childhood in v. 11a) until the time of the completion of the canon (represented by the body's maturity in v. 11b). Thus, the church would continue to grow until the time of the *parousia* when maturity will be complete, with the body of Christ conformed to His image. Since the canon was completed *before* Christ's return, this means that while some gifts would continue, prophecy, tongues, and the gift of knowledge ceased when the canon was finished in the first century.

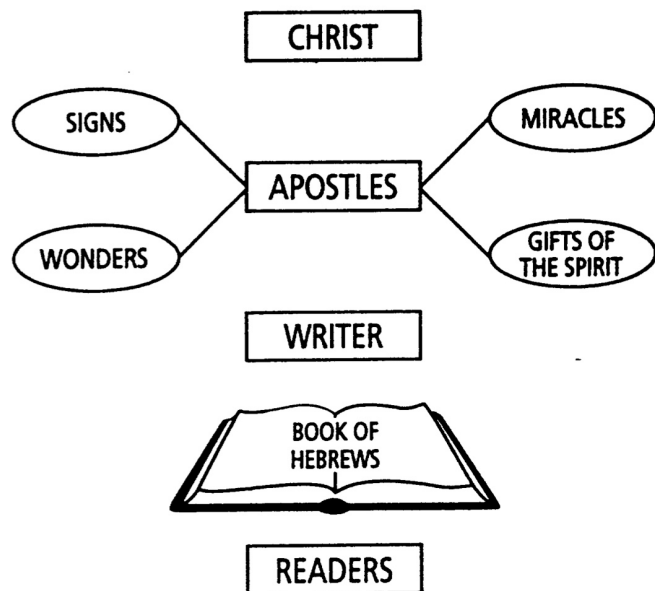
## Other Passages Indicating Some Gifts were Temporary

**Hebrews 2:3-4** indicates that various gifts (v. 4) authenticated the message of Christ and the apostles. The Greek in verse 3b for "was confirmed" (ἐβεβαίωθη) is an aorist verb (past tense), inferring that even at the latest likely date of writing (AD 67-69), the sign gifts were previous gifts which fulfilled their purpose and then passed away. Perhaps this is why Paul could not heal Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:27-30), Timothy (1 Tim. 5:23), or Trophimus (2 Tim. 4:20b).

3 How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,

4 God also testifying with them, by both signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

SOURCE: Professor Manfred E. Kober, Faith Baptist College and Theological Seminary, Ankeny, Iowa 50021. Used by Permission. Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 2<sup>d</sup> ed., 145



**Ephesians 2:20** shows that apostles and prophets were the foundation of the church. A look at the nature of these gifts (see pp. 20-28) indicates that both the apostles and prophets disappeared from the church, having made no provision for successors—except in the case of Judas (Acts 1:15f.).

However, James and other apostles who were martyrs were not replaced (Acts 12:2). Given that no NT passages support apostolic succession, the gift of apostleship was then temporary in nature.

**Revelation 22:18-19** warns against claiming additional prophetic revelations following the writing of the book of Revelation. Many today suppose that God personally gives them prophecies, thus adding to His Word and violating His warning in these verses.

Additional evidence for the temporary nature of some gifts can be found on the gift study guides for each gift. Please refer to the "Temporary Nature" sections of each temporary gift for further discussions on how these nine gifts were of a temporary nature. Also consult:

Edgar, Thomas R. *Miraculous Gifts*. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1983. 366 pp.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Satisfied by the Promise of the Spirit: Affirming the Fullness of God's Provision for Spiritual Living*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996. 283 pp. (A response to Deere's book, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* and an update on Edgar's *Miraculous Gifts*.)

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Cessation of the Sign Gifts." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 (October-December 1988): 371-86. This is copied on pages 71-79 of these notes.

Farnell, F. David. "When Will the Gift of Prophecy Cease?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 150 (April-June 1993): 171-202.

MacArthur, John. *Charismatic Chaos*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. 415 pp.

McRae, William. *Dynamics of Spiritual Gifts*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976, pp. 90-99.



## Transitional Diagrams

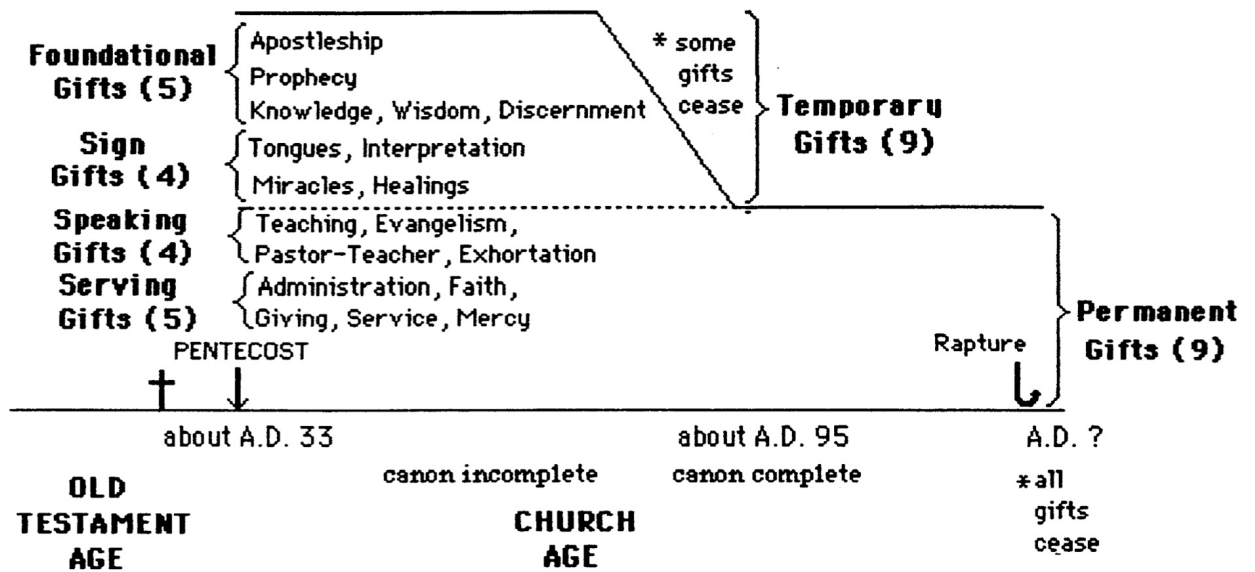
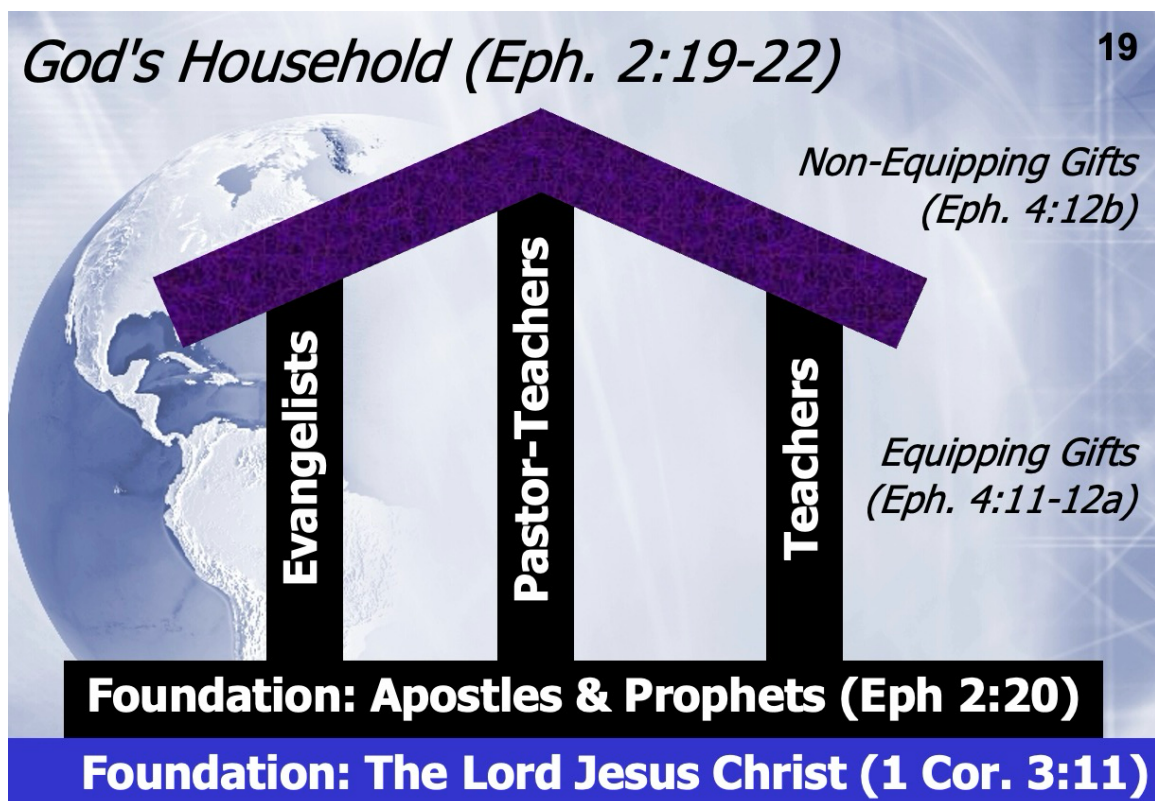


DIAGRAM 1

From Ephesians PPT, slide 245:



## Temporary Foundational Gift

## Apostleship

In Lists: 1 Corinthians 12:28, 29; Ephesians 4:11

Greek: **apostolos** (ἀπόστολος) is from **apo** "from" plus **stello** "I send," i.e., one sent forth, a delegate, a messenger sent forth on a mission with orders from his superior, an apostle.

"The term 'apostle' means an envoy or delegate or ambassador. It was very familiar to the Jewish mind and referred to a special emissary, sent out with legal authority to act on behalf of the one who sent him" (MacArthur, *Liberated for Life*, 11). However, its use in the New Testament (with a few exceptions) is very restrictive, referring to a specific office and gift limited to only a few men. Here are the four different scriptural uses of the word **apostolos** from most common to least common usage (translations are in quotes). Only the first clearly indicates the gift, but the second is possible.

- 1) The twelve disciples plus Paul: "apostles" (Luke 6:13; 9:10; 1 Cor. 15:5), including Matthias (Acts 1:23-26) and later Paul (Gal. 1:1, 12, 15-17).
- 2) Church planters other than the twelve: "all the apostles" who saw Christ resurrected (1 Cor. 15:7) probably indicates more persons than the Twelve (v. 5) and may include Barnabas (Acts 14:4, 14), Jesus' brother James (Gal. 1:19), Andronicus and Junias (Rom. 16:7), Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy (1 Thess. 1:1; 2:6-7), and Apollos (1 Cor. 4:6, 9). Yet each of these texts is debatable.
- 3) Missionaries: "messengers" (2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25), "one who is sent" (John 13:16).
- 4) Jesus: "Apostle" (Heb. 3:1).

**Definition:** The divinely ordained gift to establish the Church on earth by divine revelation, unquestioned authority, and authentication by miracles.

### Characteristics:

1. Chosen directly by Christ (Luke 6:13; Acts 9:15; Rom. 1:5; Gal. 1-2; 1 Tim. 2:7) or by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:2).
2. Had miraculous powers as "divine credentials" of their office (2 Cor. 12:11-12; Acts 5:12-17).
3. Received direct revelation from God (Gal. 1:12; Eph. 3:1-6; Col. 1:25-27; 1 Cor. 7:10; 11:23ff; 15:3ff; 2 Cor. 12:1-7; Jude 17-18).
4. Teachings possessed unquestioned authority as the commandments of God (1 Cor. 4:19-21; 5:3-4; 14:37-38; 2 Cor. 13:2-3, 10; 2 Pet. 3:15-16).
  - a. Exercised divine authority over *all* the churches in doctrinal matters (Acts 15:1-29).
  - b. Did not err in doctrine, but could (and did!) err in practice (Rom. 7:14-25; Gal. 2:11-13).
5. Laid the foundation of the Church (Eph. 2:20).
  - a. Prior to Pentecost announced the kingdom of God (Mark 3:13-15).
  - b. After Pentecost used by God to open the doors of salvation to Jews (Acts 2:38-41), to Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17), and to Gentiles (Acts 10:44-45).
6. Witnessed the resurrected Christ (Acts 1:22; 1 Cor. 9:1).
7. Had the most important office and gift in the Church (1 Cor. 12:28).
8. Equipped the saints for service (Eph. 4:11-12) by pioneer church planting (Acts 13-14).

**Scriptural Examples:** See #1-2 in the uses of **apostolos** section above.

**Temporary Nature:** See #1-6 in the **Characteristics** section above.

### Other Viewpoints:

1. Apostleship died out in the first century, but a "missionary gift" (cross-cultural church planting) exists today (Flynn, 38-47; Graham, 138-39).
2. Apostleship exists today, defined as a ministry (not a gift) in which one is "sent forth from the church for specific Christian service" (Gothard, "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 5).
3. The "Gift of Apostle" (ability to exercise authority over several churches) and the "Gift of Missionary" (ability to minister cross-culturally) exist as separate gifts today (Wagner, 204-7).

## Temporary Foundational Gift

## Word of Wisdom

### Utterance of Wisdom, Wisdom

In Lists: 1 Corinthians 12:8

Greek: **logos** (λόγος) "a word (as embodying an idea)" (Strong)  
 "the expression of thought, not the mere name of an object" (Vine)  
**sophia** (σοφία) "wisdom" (BAGD)

The common meaning of the word "wisdom" today refers to a superior ability to apply knowledge to one's experience (discernment in life). This same meaning appears in Scripture (Matt. 12:42; Acts 6:3, 10; 7:10; etc.) However, this does not seem to be Paul's use of the word in 1 Corinthians. The "wisdom" associated with this gift refers not to natural (human) intellect for two reasons:

- 1) All of the spiritual gifts are *supernatural* (not human) enablements, and
- 2) Paul uses **sophia** 17 times in 1 Corinthians (1:17, 19, 20, 21a, 21b, 22, 24, 30; 2:1, 4, 5, 6a, 6b, 7, 13; 3:19; 12:8), usually contrasting man's "wisdom" with God's true wisdom. This wisdom of God concerns the whole system of revealed truth.

The other lists of gifts where "word of wisdom" is not found (cf. Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:28, 29-30; Eph. 4:11) mention the most important gifts first, these gifts almost without exception being the gifts of apostleship and prophecy. This pattern of listing the greater gifts first may also indicate the key importance of "word of wisdom" (and its counterpart, "word of knowledge") in relation to the other gifts since these two gifts are also listed first (1 Cor. 12:8-10).

**Definition:** The God-given ability of apostles and prophets to receive and present God's wisdom within our New Testament.

#### Characteristics:

1. A characteristic gift of the apostles and prophets (1 Cor. 12:8 with 1 Cor. 12:28, 29-30).
2. Extremely important gift to be highly valued (1 Cor. 12:8 with 1 Cor. 12:28, 29-30).
3. Concerned not with the impartation of human wisdom, but with "God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom none of the rulers of this age has understood" (1 Cor. 2:6b-8a). Throughout the book of 1 Corinthians "wisdom" relates to spiritual insight, especially received by direct revelation.
4. In order that the church may be edified through this gift, the spiritual (doctrinal) understanding given to those with the gift was to be spoken (thus, "*word* of wisdom").
5. Revelational in nature since Paul stated, "for to us [the apostles] God revealed [His wisdom] through the Spirit..." (1 Cor. 2:10).

**Scriptural Examples:** Apostles (1 Cor. 2:6-11) and prophets (1 Cor. 13:2)

**Temporary Nature:** Since the gift of word of wisdom "was a characteristic gift of apostleship and prophesying—foundational gifts not present today—and as it involved direct revelation from God—no longer experienced today—we conclude that the gift of wisdom existed only in the first century in the apostolic age, before the completion of the canon of Scripture. It was a 'foundational gift'" (McRae, 65). This quote does not imply that people today cannot have God's wisdom in the *general* sense (especially as received from the Word of God). Wisdom passed from the church only in the *technical* sense through the passing away of this spiritual gift to receive and deliver revelation.

#### Other Viewpoints/Definitions:

1. The "proclamation of wisdom, speaking wisely" (BAGD 1. a. b.).
2. The "ability to apply knowledge to vexing situations, to weigh their true nature, to exercise spiritual insight into the rightness or wrongness of a complex state of affairs..." (Flynn, 92).
3. The "ability to make God's will known to men...the capacity to apply spiritual principles to contemporary problems" (Yohn, 92; cf. LaHaye, 245).
4. The "supernatural revelation, by the Spirit, of Divine Purpose; the supernatural declaration of the Mind and Will of God; the supernatural unfolding of His Plans and Purposes concerning things, places, people: individuals, communities, nations" (Horton, 61).

## Temporary Foundational Gift

## Word of Knowledge

### Utterance of Knowledge, Knowledge

In Lists: 1 Corinthians 12:8

Greek: **logos** (λόγος) "a word (as embodying an idea)" (Strong)

"the expression of thought, not the mere name of an object" (Vine)

**gnosis** (γνῶσις) "knowledge"; frequently suggests inception or progress in knowledge (Vine); appears ten times in 1 Corinthians (1:5; 8:1a, 1b, 7, 10, 11; 12:8; 13:2, 8; 14:6).

Root: **ginosko** (γινῶσκω) "to come to know, recognize, perceive" (Strong)

Gift lists where "word of knowledge" is *not* found (cf. Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:28-31; Eph. 4:11) mention teaching as second only to apostleship and prophecy (which correspond to word of wisdom; cf. pp. 20, 23). Similarly, the high place given the gift of knowledge (second only to word of wisdom) in the 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 list may therefore show that this gift was associated with the gift of teaching. How could a first century teacher in the church know what to teach when there existed no written, infallible New Testament? Perhaps the word of knowledge accompanied the first century gift of teaching.

**Definition:** The first century teacher's divine enablement to understand, expound, and apply doctrinal truth received by direct revelation from God.

**Characteristics:**

1. Refers not to knowledge in the sense of natural (human) intellect, for all spiritual gifts are *supernatural* enablements.
2. A characteristic gift of the first century teachers (1 Cor. 12:8 with 1 Cor. 12:28, 29-30).
3. Extremely important gift to be highly valued (1 Cor. 12:8 with 1 Cor. 12:28, 29-30).
4. In order that the church may be edified through this gift, the spiritual (doctrinal) understanding given to those with the gift was to be spoken (thus, "*word of knowledge*").
5. There may be a revelational nature to this gift (1 Cor. 13:2; 14:6).
6. Whereas word of wisdom related to the apostles and prophets, word of knowledge seems to be more related to first century teachers.

**Scriptural Examples:** Peter displayed supernatural knowledge that was received directly from God, but presumably not by an audible revelation (Matt. 16:13-17).

**Temporary Nature:**

Both the gifts of prophecy and knowledge were to be "done away" before the coming of the "perfect" (1 Cor. 13:8-10). Since prophecy was a foundational gift (Eph. 2:20), it follows "that the gift of knowledge was a foundational gift, present in the early church when the doctrinal foundation was being laid by the teachers. It was particularly needful for the teacher to have such a gift as he was without the written Word of God in its entirety. As the New Testament was written and became available, this gift would no longer be necessary" (McRae, 66).

**Other Viewpoints/Definitions:**

1. The "supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit of certain facts in the mind of God" (Horton, 44).
2. The "divine enablement to perceive and systemize the great truths presented by God in His Word" (McQuay, 4; cf. Radmacher, "Spiritual Gifts," Campus Crusade; Flynn, 90-91).
3. "More practice [than the utterance of wisdom], the application of divine wisdom to daily life" (J. Oswald Sanders, 97).
4. The "special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to discover, accumulate, analyze and clarify information and ideas that are pertinent to the growth and well-being of the Body [also called the gift of scholar]" (Wagner, 260).
5. "The ability to learn the facts of God's creative universe and relate them to his revealed Word" (LaHaye, 245).
6. The "ability to understand correctly and to exhibit clearly the spiritual wisdom of God revealed to and by the apostles" (McRae, 65).

Temporary Foundational Gift (cf. 1 Corinthians notes, 161d-h; Malachi notes, 663-666)

## Prophecy

### Propheying, Inspired Utterance

In Lists: Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28, 29; Ephesians 4:11

Greek: **propheteia** (προφητεία) comes from **pro** “forth” and **phemi** “I speak,” i.e., speak forth.

“In the Septuagint [the 250 BC Greek translation of the Hebrew OT], [**‘prophetes,’** the noun form of **‘prophetia’**] is the translation of the word **‘roeh,’** a seer; 1 Sam 9:9, indicating that the prophet was one who had immediate intercourse with God. It also translates the word **‘nabhi,’** meaning either one in whom the message from God springs forth or one to whom anything is secretly communicated” (Vine).

Prophets spoke uninterpreted messages of God (2 Pet. 1:20-21). Some OT prophets did not fully understand the person or time to whom their message was directed (1 Pet. 1:10-12). NT prophets spoke divine revelation on the impulse of sudden inspiration to exhort the church (1 Cor 14:29-31), as contrasted with teachers, who systematically instructed hearers in a better understanding of the Scriptures (Acts 28:30-31).

**Definition:** “The special ability...to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to His people through a divinely anointed utterance” (C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*, 228).

**Characteristics** of those with the gift of prophecy:

1. Spoke both predictively (“fore-telling,” Acts 11:27-28; 21:10-14) and proclamation or preaching (“forth-telling,” Acts 15:32; 1 Cor 11:4-5), but always from divine origin (2 Pet. 1:21).
2. Received messages by divine revelation (1 Cor 14:26, 29-30; Eph. 3:5).
3. Did not interpret God's message, but just declared it (2 Pet. 1:20-21).
4. Declarations were 100% accurate, totally free from error (Deut 18:14-22)—the implication is that after weighing it for truth, it should be rejected if any error is taught (1 Cor 14:29).
5. Generally directed messages to believers (1 Cor 14:22) for exhortation (1 Cor 14:3), edification (1 Cor 14:3-5, 26), consolation (1 Cor 14:3), and teaching (1 Cor 14:19, 22, 31).
6. Could have evangelistic results for unbelievers in a church service (1 Cor 14:23-25), though not its main emphasis (1 Cor 14:22).
7. Served as the second most important gift in the Church (1 Cor 12:28; Eph. 4:11), to be emphasized especially over tongues (1 Cor 14:1, 5, 29).
8. Differs from *non*-inspired proclamations by teachers (Rom. 12:8) or pastor-teachers (Eph. 4:11).

**Scriptural Examples:** Agabus (Acts 11:27-28; 21:10-11), Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, Paul (Acts 13:1), Philip's four daughters (Acts 21:9), Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32).

**Temporary Nature:** Prophecy was foundational to the Church (Eph. 2:20). Revelation 22:18-19 closes the Scripture with a warning to never add to His completed revelation. Jude 3-4 also appears to suggest a closed canon, implying that God no longer speaks prophetically. However, two future witnesses are yet to come during the Great Tribulation who will both prophesy (Rev. 11:3). If true prophecies which add to God's revelation do not exist today, the warning “do not despise prophetic utterances” (1 Thess. 5:20) cannot be disobeyed except about disobeying biblical commands. Prophecy is equal in authority to the Bible, for it is God's inerrant word in spoken form rather than written form.

**Other Viewpoints:**

1. Preaching: Revelational prophecy ceased with the completion of the canon, but today “propheying has come to mean the proclamation of the written Word of God...” (Leslie Flynn, *19 Gifts of the Spirit*, 53; Earl Radmacher, “Spiritual Gifts” tape, Campus Crusade for Christ; Billy Graham, 139- 141; John MacArthur, *The Church*, 139; Alan Redpath, *The Royal Route to Heaven*, 142-43; C. K. Barrett, *1 Corinthians*, 316).
2. Exhortative Preaching: Non-revelatory prophecy is evident today in powerful, exhortative-type preaching (Gothard, “Understanding Your Spiritual Gift,” 5).
3. Revelational prophecy exists today (Charismatics, Wagner—see definition above, 228).

4. Any Christian involved in “telling something that God has spontaneously brought to mind” (Wayne A. Grudem, “Why Christians Can Still Prophecy: Scripture Encourages Us to Seek this Gift yet Today,” *Christianity Today* [September 16, 1988]: 29; cf. Grudem’s 1988 book, *The Gift of Prophecy*). His article is reproduced in my Spiritual Gifts notes, 124-28.

Grudem’s view has become popular in both charismatic and non-charismatic settings, so it deserves scrutiny. His main points are dangerous—if you believe him, then you must believe the following:

- a. OT prophets have their counterparts in NT apostles (not NT prophets) in their authoritative function of writing Scripture.

*Response:*

- 1) It is true that both wrote Scripture, but this does not lower the value of NT prophets. It only affirms that NT apostles received revelation directly from God. It does not mean that the NT prophets did not also receive divine revelation.
  - 2) NT prophets rank second after apostles (1 Cor 12:28) and thus held a very high status. In fact, they formed the foundation of the church along with the apostles (Eph. 2:20).
  - 3) Continuity between OT and NT prophets is affirmed by Peter, who noted that NT prophecy was of the same nature (Acts 2:17-18; cf. Joel 2:28).
  - 4) “The apostles were a very restricted group who existed during one period. They were promised that they would be on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28) and their names will be on the foundation of the heavenly city (Rev. 21:14). The Old Testament prophets are promised none of these things. Everything about the apostles shows their uniqueness” (Edgar, *Satisfied by the Promise of the Spirit*, 62).
- b. OT and NT prophecy are different in nature. OT prophets spoke with absolute divine authority, but “this ordinary [NT] gift of prophecy had less authority than that of the Bible, and even less than that of recognized Bible teaching in the early church” (p. 30). There exist two kinds of NT prophecy: infallible “apostolic” prophecy and fallible “congregational” prophecy.

*Response:*

- 1) Grudem’s argument begins with a broad, secular definition of prophecy meaning “one who speaks on the basis of some external influence” (p. 30). Scripture often employs secular Greek terms but attaches a more specific meaning to them (e.g., for logos, agape, etc.). We do not determine the nature of OT prophecy from secular usage but only Scripture; the NT (not secular Greek usage) is also our guide for determining the nature of NT prophecy.
- 2) Identical terms for OT and NT prophecy are used (cf. LXX), so we should assume these are of the same nature unless good exegetical grounds can be shown for a difference. Would God use the same terms with completely different meanings, leading to confusion?
- 3) We should test and not despise prophecies (1 Thess. 5:20-21), but this hardly argues for less authority than OT messages. It is identical to the OT requirement to test true prophecies to make sure they come true under penalty of death (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:14-22). Only the death penalty is not reiterated in the NT. The parallel of “Thus saith the Lord” is still used in the NT as “The Holy Spirit says” (Acts 21:11).
- 4) Paul’s disregard for the Spirit’s warning to avoid Jerusalem (Acts 21:4) is not “fallible but inspired” prophecy, as Grudem claims. It may indicate a fallible Paul. He felt compelled by the Spirit (20:22-23), but maybe he was mistaken. Perhaps God wanted him to live longer than he did. Apostles sometimes erred in practice (e.g., Peter withdrew from Gentiles in Galatians 2; Paul struggled with sin in Rom 7:14-25), but they did not err in doctrine.

- 5) Grudem says, "If prophecy had equaled God's word in authority, [Paul] would never have had to tell [the Thessalonians] not to despise it" (p. 30); but this statement shows great ignorance of the massive rejection of OT prophets (Matt. 23:37; Heb. 11:33-40). People reject God's inspired word even today despite His warnings.
  - 6) The stipulation that prophets were to "weigh what is said" (1 Cor 14:29) is interpreted by Grudem as "sift the good from the bad" (p. 31). But is this the intent of Paul? The discernment was to judge whether the message itself was from God, not to pick and choose which parts were good and bad. This is why God provided the gift of discernment (1 Cor 12:10), for false prophets could be among them (12:3).
  - 7) The stipulation that prophets were allowed to interrupt one already speaking (1 Cor 14:30) does not indicate fallibility in their messages as Grudem claims (p. 31). Why can't God stop one person from declaring an inspired message when enough has been said? "A prophecy which is truly from God is evidenced by an orderly and rational manner of presentation" (Farnell, 86). True prophets remained in control of their mind in contrast to pagan ones. This verse says nothing at all about the content or reliability of the prophecy.
  - 8) The idea that early church prophets had less authority than teachers is erroneous (cf. Grudem, 34). True, elders were to teach, but even this emphasizes the high standing attributed to prophecy, with which few (if any) elders were gifted. In fact, prophecy appears first when listed with teaching (Acts 13:1), indicating prophecy's prominence. The spiritual gifts are listed in order of importance in 1 Corinthians 12:28, with prophets ahead of teachers. Surely, if the gift included erroneous material inspired by the Holy Spirit, it would not be given such priority! The high place ascribed to prophecy is clear in that it is the only gift mentioned in each gift list in the NT (cf. Spiritual Gifts notes, 6). Please see the other contrasts between prophecy and teaching in 1 Corinthians notes, page 161h.
- c. God is the author of error because He brings ideas to believers' minds, but they mess up in passing along the message.

Response:

- 1) Grudem amazingly accuses the Holy Spirit of error (called "inaccuracies of detail") when Agabus prophesies that Jews would bind Paul, though Romans bound him (Acts 21:10-11, 33). However, the Jews instigated the riot, which led to the Romans binding Paul (21:27f.), so the Spirit was not wrong in its message through Agabus.
- 2) Agabus also prophesied that the Jews would hand Paul over to the Gentiles (21:11b). The fact that they preferred to kill him in no way argues for "inaccuracy in detail" by the Spirit as Grudem alleges, for the Jews did hand him over, though involuntarily.
- 3) Grudem essentially teaches that a message can be inspired but erroneous, which is incredible to imagine. Will God really speak error? If so, what about our Bible? This is akin to saying Scripture is inspired but not inerrant in its original manuscripts. While there have always been false (erroneous) prophecies from Satan, it is incredible that evangelicals now actually believe in "inspired but erroneous" messages from God himself!
- 4) If NT "congregational prophecy" was "simply a very human—and sometimes partially mistaken—report of something the Holy Spirit brought to someone's mind" (Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy*..., 14), who can determine the authoritative (accurate) from the non-authoritative (mistaken) messages of God?

- d. Any Christian may prophesy. As defined earlier, this new view on prophecy is simply “telling something that God has spontaneously brought to mind” (Grudem, “Why Christians Can Still Prophesy,” 29). Since any Christian can share something that the Lord has impressed in his/her mind, prophecy can be exercised by any believer.

Response:

- 1) “Are all apostles? Are all prophets?” (1 Cor 12:29). The obvious answer is “no” since God distributes the gifts as He wills (12:11, 18) and therefore has not given the potential of the same gift to every believer. Thus, this verse is clear that not every Christian should or can have the gift of prophecy.
- 2) “Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy” (1 Cor 14:1; cf. v. 39) does not exhort each believer to prophesy. If it did, it would contradict 1 Corinthians 12:29 (quoted above), which says that it is not God’s will for all to prophesy. Instead, this is written in the second person plural (“all of you”) to encourage the whole church to promote prophecy over tongues. This is consistent with Paul’s limitation of no more than three prophets speaking per service (14:29).
- 3) Grudem supposes that even the discernment of prophecy can be exercised by any believer (The Gift..., 60-62; cf. 1 Cor 14:29), but the most logical antecedent of “the others” is the “prophets” noted in the first part of the verse. Paul used *allos* (“another of the same kind”) rather than *heteros* (“another of a different kind”; i.e., not a prophet). Grudem notes, “Especially hard to believe is the idea that the teachers, administrators, and other church leaders without special gifts of prophecy would sit passively awaiting the verdict of an elite [prophetic] group” (p. 62). But is this so hard to imagine? “Inspired spokesmen were in the best position to judge spontaneously whether a new utterance agreed with Paul’s teaching... The responsibility of New Testament prophets to weigh the prophecies of others does not imply that true prophets could give false prophecies, but that false prophets could disguise their falsity by occasional true utterances” (Farnell, 84-85).

### Summary of Prophetic Views

Grudem’s View	Biblical View
Prophecy is declaring anything (true or false) that the Spirit brings to one’s mind	Prophecy is declaring God’s inspired and inerrant revelation to others
The above definition was invented in 1988 by Wayne Grudem	The above definition has been the teaching of the church for 20 centuries
OT prophets are parallel to NT apostles	OT prophets are parallel to NT prophets
God changed the definition of prophecy from the OT to the NT	God kept the meaning of prophecy consistent between the two testaments
God gives some prophecies with errors	God gives all prophecies without errors (2 Pet. 1:20-21)
Any believer can prophesy	Only those with the gift of prophecy can prophesy (1 Cor 12:29)
There’s two kinds of NT prophecy (fallible and infallible)	There’s one kind of NT prophecy (infallible)
Fallible prophecy can be inspired	Fallible prophecy is false prophecy (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:14-20)
God sometimes lies	God always tells the truth since He cannot lie (Heb. 6:18)



## Prophecy versus Teaching

Since both prophecy and teaching communicate God's Word, is there any difference between them? Grudem says one key difference is that "prophecy has less authority than teaching" (Wayne A. Grudem, "Why Christians Can Still Prophesy: Scripture Encourages Us to Seek this Gift Yet Today," *Christianity Today* [September 16, 1988]: 34). The following cites more biblical contrasts:

	Teaching	Prophecy
<i>Value</i>	Inferior: Teaching is listed after prophecy in the leadership structure of the church at Antioch (Acts 13:1)	Superior: Prophecy has a long OT history of declaring an uninterpreted word of God (2 Pet. 1:20-21) whereas teachers must interpret it
<i>Relation to the Other Gifts</i>	A less important gift: listed after prophecy in the priority of the gifts (1 Cor 12:28)	The second most important gift, superseded only by apostleship (1 Cor 12:28)
<i>Authority</i>	Less authoritative than prophecy since God's written word must be interpreted by the teacher	More authoritative than teaching since the spoken word is divinely inspired and uninterpreted (2 Pet. 1:20-21)
<i>Source of Truth is ...</i>	God's Word (Col. 3:16)	God's Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21)
<i>Revelatory Nature</i>	Uninspired explanation of already revealed truth (Acts 15:35; 11:12, 26; Rom. 2:21; 15:4; Heb. 5:12)	Inspired foretelling the future or "forthtelling" (declaring doctrinal truth) received by revelation (1 Cor 14:19, 26, 29-30; Eph. 3:5)
<i>Style</i>	Systematic	Spontaneous (Acts 11:28; 21:4, 10-11)
<i>Limitations</i>	No limitation on teaching is given in church services	Two or three prophetic messages in each service (14:29a), speak in turn (14:30-31), weigh what is said (14:29b, 32)
<i>Leadership Requirements</i>	Required of elders (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; Tit. 1:9) since the church needs continued teaching of truth through its history	Not required of elders as this would provide too high a standard; also, revelation need not continue after the canon is complete (Rev. 22:18-19)
<i>Foundation for the Church</i>	Not foundational in nature for the Church—the foundation is not in interpreted messages but in divinely spoken and written messages from God provided by apostles and prophets	Foundational for the Church along with apostleship (Eph. 2:20), which means that it need not continue through Church history since the foundation is provided once-for-all (e.g., no apostles today)
<i>Cessation</i>	No hint is given in the NT that this gift has ceased or will do so in the church age	The gift will cease by someone other than self: passive voice (1 Cor 13:8a; cf. Spiritual Gifts notes, 29)

Note: I believe this chart provides a more credible contrast between the two gifts than offered by Grudem on page 34 of his article cited above. While he rightfully upholds the value of teaching, his biblical examples do not actually contrast teaching with prophecy. Rather, they only show the great importance that teaching had in the early church.

## Temporary Foundational Gift

## Distinguishing of Spirits

### Discerning Spirits, Discernment

In Lists: 1 Corinthians 12:10

Greek: **diakrisis** (διάκρισις) "distinguishing, differentiation...ability to distinguish between spirits in 1 Corinthians 12:10" (BAGD); "the act of judgment" (Strong); the noun form is also found in Romans 14:1; Hebrews 5:14.

"DIAKRISIS...a distinguishing, a clear discrimination, discerning, judging, is translated 'discernings' [KJV] in 1 Corinthians 12:10, of discerning spirits judging by evidence whether they are evil or of God" (Vine).

Verb: **diakrino** (διακρίνω) is **dia** "through" and **krino** "judge;" some NASB translations are "decide" (1 Cor. 6:5), "pass judgment" (1 Cor. 14:29), "discern" (Matt. 16:2), etc.

What it means to "discern spirits" is much debated, especially on what is meant by "spirits." Basically, it means being able to determine between the sources of different types of spiritual insight. This is especially true of those who could tell whether one who claimed to speak inspired utterances from God actually was telling the truth. Since God expected prophets to exercise this type of wisdom and insight (1 Cor. 14:32), this may indicate that at least the New Testament prophets had this gift, though perhaps others as well.

"Tongues must be interpreted; prophecy must be discerned" (Gangel, 92).

**Definition:** The God-given ability to judge an oral declaration from someone claiming to be a prophet as from a divine, human, or demonic source.

**Characteristics** of those with the gift of distinguishing of spirits:

1. Ability to evaluate the truth of a prophet's oral declaration (1 Cor. 14:29).
2. Possibly all prophets had this gift (1 Cor. 14:32).
3. Ability to confront spiritual heresy (1 Cor. 14:29).

**Scriptural Examples:** Prophets in the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 14:29-32)

**Scriptural Commands:** 1 Thess. 5:20-21; 1 John 4:1

**Temporary Nature:** The prophecy handout explains reasons why the gift of prophecy passed from the church in the first century. Assuming this to be true, it makes sense that the gift of discerning of spirits was also foundational in nature since it served to evaluate true prophecies.

"In the midst of many forms of oral revelation, it was essential in the early church to have divine assistance in detecting the false amidst the true. Satan then, as now, attempted every deceiving device. [This gift] was apparently the ability given by the Holy Spirit to discern the true from the false sources of supernatural revelation given in oral form. As the New Testament had not been completed, there was no written Word to appeal to except the Old Testament. With the coming in of the completed New Testament, the written Word made this work of the Spirit no longer necessary" (Walvoord, 188).

**Other Viewpoints:**

1. Revealing false motives in others (Flynn 153, 154; Radmacher, "Spiritual Gifts" tape, Campus Crusade for Christ; Acts 5:39; 8:20-23; 13:10, 11).
2. Distinguishing between mental disorders and demonic possession (Bridge and Phypers; Acts 16:16-22).
3. Discerning spiritual truth from spiritual error in someone's teaching (Flynn, 153).
4. Discerning proposed courses of action as from divine, human, or satanic origin (Kinghorn, 11).

Temporary Sign Gift (cf. 1 Corinthians notes, 161i-m)

## Speaking in Tongues

### Speaking with Tongues, Strange Tongues, Tongues, Speaks in a Tongue, Speaks with Other Tongues, Tongues of Men, Various Kinds of Tongues

In Lists: 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28, 30

Greek: *glossa* (γλῶσσα) "tongue," "language" (BAGD 1., 2.)

The word *glossa* has three different meanings in the New Testament:

1. The tongue as an organ of speech (Mark 7:33; Rom. 3:13; 14:11; 1 Cor. 14:9, etc.)
2. Something shaped like a tongue, such as forked flames of fire (Acts 2:3)
3. A language:
  - a. Understood by the speaker (1 Cor. 14:10; Rev. 5:9)
  - b. Not understood by the speaker (Acts 2:4; 10:46-47; 19:6; 1 Cor. 12:10, 28; 13:1, 8; 14:1-40)

Speaking in tongues is only in Mark 16:17 and Acts and 1 Corinthians (cf. 3b above). Some teach a fourth *glossa* as an "ecstatic utterance" (emotional speaking not in a foreign language). They seek to support this based upon Romans 8:26 ("...the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words"), 1 Corinthians 13:1 ("If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels...") and 1 Corinthians 14:2 ("...one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God... no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit"). They say Acts *glossa* are "languages," but 1 Corinthians *glossa* are "ecstatic utterances."

This interpretation fails on several accounts:

1. Romans 8:26 says that it is the *Spirit* who speaks, not us—and He does so with *inaudible*, *nonuttered*, internal groanings (Edgar, "Cessation," 384).
2. 1 Corinthians 13:1 does not teach that anyone *can* speak an angelic language, but only that *if* one could speak any earthly or heavenly language, this ability would be useless without love.
3. To "speak mysteries" (1 Cor. 14:2) means the speaker and others cannot comprehend the foreign language he is using; it does not indicate that the tongue is not a known language (cf. v. 10).
4. The *only* description of tongues speaking in the NT (Acts 2:4-11) is in real human languages.
5. Paul uses *glossa* three other times (Rom. 3:13; 14:11; Phil. 2:11) outside of 1 Corinthians, each time referring to intelligible speech. Therefore, *glossa* in the NT always refers to known languages.

**Definition:** A God-given ability to speak divine revelation in a foreign language unknown by the speaker to unbelieving Jews in their language (as a sign) that a gifted interpreter can translate to edify the church.

#### Characteristics:

1. Unique among the spiritual gifts in the following respects:
  - a. The only spiritual gift with restricted use (except 2-3 prophets per service, 1 Cor. 14:29):
    - 1) Only to be spoken by 2-3 people at a church gathering, each in turn (1 Cor. 14:27)
    - 2) Only to be exercised if an interpreter is present (1 Cor. 14:28), although each speaker should pray to be able to interpret his message (1 Cor. 14:13). This is not a command to pray for the *gift* of interpretation (ability to understand *others'* tongues messages)!
    - 3) Only to be spoken by men in the church, never women (1 Cor. 14:34-35)
  - b. The only gift in which the believer uses a language unknown to him (1 Cor. 14:2, 11)
  - c. The only gift ever given to *groups* of people—on three unique occasions (Acts 2, 10, 19)
  - d. The only gift ever over-emphasized in a New Testament church (1 Cor. 14)
  - e. The only gift ever said to be misused in a New Testament church (1 Cor. 14).
  - f. The only gift mentioned as gradually ceasing in and of itself (1 Cor. 13:8b; see below)
  - g. The only gift which is useless for edification when exercised apart from another spiritual gift, i.e., the gift of interpretation of tongues (1 Cor. 14:5, 11, 13, 27, 28)
2. Audible speech (Acts 2:4, 11; 1 Cor. 13:1; 14:2ff) in known languages (Acts 2:4-11)
3. Least important of all of the gifts (1 Cor. 12:28), especially inferior to prophecy (1 Cor. 14)
4. Can be controlled by voluntarily refraining from speaking (1 Cor. 14:27-28)
5. Not given to all believers (1 Cor. 12:30)
6. Only understood by God, not men (1 Cor. 14:2, 28), so prayer in a tongue (1 Cor. 14:14) is a *negative* action rather than praise (Acts 2:11; 10:46; cf. Edgar, *Miraculous Gifts*, 181, 186-99)

7. Revelational (1 Cor. 14:16) since God Himself is speaking (14:21)—presumably without error!
8. There may be a twofold purpose of tongues:
  - a. Sign (Mark 16:17) to unbelievers (1 Cor. 14:21-22), including Jews (Acts 2:4-11) and Gentiles (Acts 10:44-48; 19:1-7; 1 Cor. 14:22-24) to authenticate the message of salvation in Christ (Heb. 2:3, 4). They authenticated God's activity in evangelistic settings (Acts 19:6).
  - b. Edification to the church when translated (1 Cor. 12:7; 14:5, 12, 17, 19, 26).

**Note:** Another commonly taught purpose is for self-edification, based upon 1 Corinthians 14:4. However, self-edification is merely an accompanying circumstance or by-product of exercising this gift (or any gift!). Gifts are given not for selfish ends but for the "common good" (1 Cor. 12:7).

**Scriptural Examples:** Apostles at Pentecost (Acts 2:4, 11), Gentile believers (Acts 19:46), converted disciples of John (Acts 19:6), Corinthians (1 Cor. 12-14), and Paul (1 Cor. 14:18)

**Temporary Nature:** In 1 Corinthians 13:8, "to be done away" (καταργηθήσονται) in the passive voice indicates that something *outside* of prophecy or knowledge would end their use. However, for tongues "to cease" (παύσονται) in the middle voice indicates that "the subject is *both* the performer and receiver of the action" (Goetchius, *The Language of the New Testament* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965], 100). This indicates that the gift of tongues would stop in and of *itself* without any object acting upon it. The gifts of prophecy and knowledge were to be "done away" at the coming of the "complete" ("perfect"; 1 Cor. 13:10), which probably refers to the relative maturity of the Body of Christ at the completion of the New Testament since they fulfilled their purpose by providing us with God's Word in written form (see pp. 16-17). However, tongues ceased by *itself* after fulfilling its purpose as a sign to Israel (Isa. 28:11, quoted in 1 Cor. 14:21) and to unbelieving Gentiles (1 Cor. 14:22-24).

"God was thereby giving notice to Israel that He was moving from the Jews to the Gentiles as His people. Paul explains this in detail in Romans 11 and Jesus had prophesied it in Matthew 21:33-43... In 70 AD Israel was wiped out in fulfillment of Deuteronomy 28:63-65. They were dispersed into every nation on the face of the earth, and since that day there has been no Biblical purpose for the gift of tongues" (Radmacher, *Controversial Spiritual Gifts*, 18). Also, Hebrews 2:3-4 says "signs" (including tongues) authenticated the apostolic message.

How then can one explain "speaking in tongues" today? It must not be the biblical gift of tongues, but ecstatic speaking, which is often called "glossolalia" (*glossa* "tongue" + *lalia* "speech"). Gibberish then and now serves not as a sign but only underscores the Corinthians' or our pagan backgrounds. Today's phenomenon (ecstatic utterances) may be attributed to one of two sources:

1. **Self:** Highly emotional experiences for many people have caused them to suddenly burst out in a gibberish, ecstatic speech, which has often been confused with the biblical gift of tongues. This has been studied extensively by psychologists as a psychological phenomenon.
2. **Satan:** The devil is a master counterfeiter, even appearing as an angel of light if necessary (2 Cor. 11:4), so the more closely ecstatic speaking resembles true tongues, the more suspect it may be! Satan is especially interested in convincing believers to rely upon any experience more than the Word of God. Ecstatic speaking is characteristic of many cults and religions, including Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and pagan African cults.

But how about, "Do not forbid speaking in tongues" (1 Cor. 14:39)? This applies only to the true gift of tongues—not to ecstatic utterances. Nothing in the NT prohibits us from limiting ecstatic speech.

#### Other Viewpoints:

1. Tongues today edifies oneself in a "private prayer language," as well as "public tongues" to communicate immediate messages from God to the church (charismatics; Wagner, 253).
2. Tongues exist today not as a gift, but as a "manifestation" (result in *someone else's* life). This is a supernatural result "of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives and also in the lives of those to whom we minister." So "various tongues" means that as a tongues speaker speaks, "another's spirit is freed to communicate with God" (Gothard, "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 5).

## Questions on Tongues Speaking

### 1. *Why can't tongues be a special prayer language for private use?*

- a. The purpose of the gifts is that they might edify *others* (1 Cor. 12:7; 14:26). The one mention of tongues edifying self is a *negative* action in comparison to prophecy's *positive* result of building up others (14:4). Self-edification is not to be the *goal* of exercising a spiritual gift, but simply an accompanying circumstance (cf. 1 Cor. 13:5).
- b. The purpose of tongues was to serve as a sign to unbelievers (1 Cor. 14:22). J. B. Phillips translates this, "That means that tongues are a sign of God's power, not for those who are unbelievers but for those who already believe" (*The New Testament in Modern English*, rev. ed., NY: Macmillan, 1972). He explains this misinterpretation thus, "This is the sole instance of the translator's departing from the accepted text. He felt bound to conclude, from the sense of the next three verses, that we have here either a slip of the pen on the part of Paul, or, more probably, a copyist's error" (Phillips, 552). Phillips fails to mention, however, that *not one* of the thousands of NT manuscripts reads with his own invented reading! Nor can an error by Paul be reconciled with an inerrant text. Despite Paul's clear teaching that tongues serve as a sign to *unbelievers*, most charismatics today see this as a sign to them as *believers* that God is at work in their lives. Examples of tongues usage includes both outside (Acts 2, 10, 10) and inside the assembly (1 Cor. 14), but the clearly stated purpose is as a sign to unbelievers. One could infer from this that God only grants a tongues utterance to an assembly when an unbeliever is present (14:23), but even in this case it should be translated so that believers could be edified (14: 5, 12, 17, 19, 26).
- c. One who speaks in a tongue does so "to God" (1 Cor. 14:2), but Paul clearly says that prayer with understanding is superior to prayer in a tongue because prayer without understanding, by comparison, is a *negative* action (1 Cor. 14:14-15).
- d. Tongues was not given to all (1 Cor. 12:30), so why would God give a special prayer language to only *some* of His children? While some may ask the same question ("Why did only some receive it?") of any of the gifts, prayer is a privilege shared by all.
- e. God's provision of the gift of interpretation of tongues (1 Cor. 12:30) shows that tongues were not for devotional use. Tongues should never be used without interpretation (14:26-28), which indicates that a private use is out of character with the purpose of the gift. Even though a tongues speaker should seek to understand what he is saying (14:13), this person has no guarantee that he does indeed understand. While very few who claim such a "private prayer language" ever seek to understand their utterances, Paul noted that prayer with understanding is better (1 Cor. 14:19).
- f. The use of every gift is public, not private. In every case where gifts were used, the body is assembled. But how are we to understand 1 Corinthians 14:28 in this respect: "If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God"? Is this not a private use? No, for every time in Scripture that tongues are spoken they are uttered within the context of a group—even the speaking of 1 Corinthians 14:28 takes place "in the church" (cf. 14:19 which is not clearly contrasted with private use).
- g. Paul said that he spoke in tongues more than the Corinthians (14:18). Did this not indicate a private usage? No, for Paul never stated the circumstances or location of this practice. He then notes, "but in the church" intelligible speech is better than unintelligible speech (v. 19). Is this not a comparison between private and public tongues? No, rather he contrasts tongues used outside of the assembly as a sign to unbelievers (vv. 20f.) with tongues needing interpretation in the assembly. In both cases tongues are public.

## 2. *Why isn't speaking in tongues proof that one has been baptized with the Spirit?*

- a. Receiving at least *one* spiritual gift is an evidence that one has received Christ (i.e., been baptized with the Spirit; 1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 18), but nowhere does the Bible say this gift must be tongues. The "gift" of Acts 2:38 is not tongues but the Spirit Himself.
- b. All Christians are baptized with the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13), but not all believers are to speak in tongues (1 Cor. 12:30); therefore, a connection between the two cannot be maintained.
- c. Scripture records the salvation experience of dozens of individuals; however, on only two accounts did salvation result in tongues (Acts 10, 19).

## 3. *Why shouldn't I seek the gift of tongues?*

- a. You shouldn't seek *any* spiritual gift since the Holy Spirit is the one who decides which gift each believer should possess (1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 18).
- b. Even if you *were* to seek a gift, it is clear that tongues would not be that gift since it is the least important of the spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:28).
- c. There are only five passages in the NT which mention tongues-speaking (Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4-11; 10:46; 19:6; 1 Cor. 12-14). None of these passages indicate that the speakers ever sought for the gift. In fact, Peter and the saved Jews were amazed that it happened (Acts 10:45). Therefore, the biblical pattern is not to seek the gift—except in the case of the Corinthians, who were rebuked for it (1 Cor. 14:1-2, 39).

## 4. *Should the use of the gift of tongues in Acts be the pattern for the church today?*

- a. The problem with this question is that it assumes a single pattern of tongues-speaking in Acts, which the following chart shows did not exist. It was bestowed at differing times in relation to salvation and to separate groups. The only common element is that in each occurrence, it served as a sign to Jews.
- b. Interpretive problems have often arisen when establishing doctrinal beliefs based only upon the material in the Book of Acts. A proper understanding of Acts can only be obtained when one recognizes that it is a transitional book and therefore not intended to set norms for the post-apostolic age. This is especially true in regard to speaking in tongues in Acts:

Text	Speakers	Audience	Time	Purpose
2:1-4	Apostles+	Unsaved Jews at Pentecost	After salvation	Validate for Jews the fulfillment of Joel 2
8:14-17	Samaritans	Saved Jews doubting God's plan (Peter+)	After salvation	Validate for Jews God's acceptance of Samaritans
10:44-47	Gentiles (Cornelius+)	Saved Jews doubting God's plan (Peter+)	At salvation	Validate for Jews God's acceptance of Gentiles
19:1-7	OT believers in Messiah	Jews needing gospel message confirmed	At salvation	Validate for Jews God's message through Paul

Chart adapted from Stanley D. Toussaint, "Acts," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 2:408

Notice that in each case above, tongues were given on unique occasions to validate God's work for Jews who were in attendance. As far as we know, the biblical gift of tongues was not given to groups of believers ever happened again. Thus, no norm can be established from Acts.

## Tongues in Acts and 1 Corinthians

Speaking in tongues in Acts has both similarities and differences with the tongues of 1 Corinthians. While the tongues themselves are the same, the circumstances were different.

<b>Comparisons</b>	<b>Tongues in Acts</b>	<b>Tongues in 1 Corinthians</b>
<i>Known foreign languages used</i>	Languages of the Roman world were spoken (Acts 2:7-11)	Since the same term ( <i>glossa</i> ) is used, we should assume the nature of the gift is the same
<i>Both functioned as a sign to unbelievers</i>	The listeners were exhorted to receive forgiveness (Acts 2:38)	Unbelievers in the assembly needed translation for blessing (1 Cor. 14:21-22)
<i>Source is God rather than self</i>	The tongues speakers were not trying to get the gift (Acts 2:2)	Tongues is among the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12-14)
<b>Contrasts</b>	<b>Tongues in Acts</b>	<b>Tongues in 1 Corinthians</b>
<i>Speaker's Control</i>	Uncontrolled	Controlled
<i>Given to...</i>	Groups only	Individuals who are gifted
<i>Phenomenon</i>	Wind and fire (Acts 2:2)	None
<i>Frequency per person</i>	One-time	Repeated
<i>Those who understand</i>	Native speakers	Those gifted in interpretation
<i>Interpretation</i>	No corollary gift	Yes (corollary gift of interpretation)
<i>Dates</i>	AD 33-53 (Acts 2-19)	AD 56
<i>When occurred</i>	Generally at salvation	Generally after salvation
<i>Use</i>	Always used properly	Often misused
<i>Restrictions</i>	None	Some: only 2-3 per service, each in turn, need interpreter (1 Cor. 14:27)

## Tongues versus Prophecy

(cf. 1 Corinthians notes, 161m)

The Apostle Paul felt that one of the best ways to teach the proper emphasis regarding the gift of tongues was to contrast tongues with prophecy. Most of 1 Corinthians 14 is devoted to showing the superiority of prophecy over tongues. Paul's teaching here is summarized in the following chart along with other relevant passages.

	<b>Tongues</b>	<b>Prophecy</b>
<b>Value</b>	Inferior (14:5a)	Superior (14:1)
<b>Relation to Other Gifts</b>	The least important gift (12:28)	The second most important gift (12:28)
<b>Language Used</b>	Foreign (14:10)	Vernacular (14:19)
<b>Corollary Gift</b>	Interpretation of tongues (12:30; 14:27-28)	Discerning of spirits (12:10; 14:29)
<b>Speaker's Knowledge of Language</b>	Unknown: "utters mysteries with his spirit...my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful" (14:2b, 14)	Known: "pray with my spirit [and] with my mind" (14:15, 19)
<b>Value (without Interpretation)</b>	Harmful: people cannot understand and thus are not edified (14:16-17, 23, 28)	Great: people can understand and thus are edified (14:5b, 24-25)
<b>Edification (without Interpretation)</b>	Self only (14:4a; cf. 10:24; 12:7, 11)	Entire church (14:4b)
<b>Direction of Speech</b>	To God (14:2)	To men (14:3)
<b>Result in Others</b>	Revelation, knowledge, prophecy, word of instruction (14:6)	Strengthening, encouragement, and comfort (14:3b)
<b>Type of Communication</b>	Speaking (14:6), prayer (14:14), praise (14:16), singing? (14:15b)	Foretelling the future, "forthtelling" or declaring doctrinal truth (14:19)
<b>Purpose</b>	Sign to unbelieving Jews (14:21-22a)	Message to believers (14:22b)
<b>Limitations</b>	Two or three tongues messages in each service (14:27a), speak in turn (14:27b), someone must interpret (14:27c-28)	Two or three prophetic messages in each service (14:29a), speak in turn (14:30-31), weigh what is said (14:29b, 32)
<b>Exhortation</b>	Negative: Do not forbid tongues (14:39b)	Positive: Be eager to prophesy (14:39a)
<b>Agent of Cessation</b>	Self: middle voice (13:8b)	Someone other than self: passive voice (13:8a)



## Temporary Sign Gift

# Interpretation of Tongues

## Interpretation

In Lists: 1 Corinthians 12:10, 30

Greek: **hermeneuo** (ἑρμηνεύω) "explain, interpret, translate" (BAGD)

**dihermeneuo** (διερμηνεύω) "translate, explain, interpret" (BAGD)

The forms of *hermeneuo* which refer to the gift of interpretation of tongues are found in 1 Corinthians 12:10, 30; 14:5, 13, 26, 27. Each reference implies or states specifically that the interpretation refers only to translating the gift of tongues into the language of those who listened to the tongues message. An analysis of all other uses of *hermeneuo* (John 1:38, 42; 9:7; Luke 24:27; Acts 9:36; Heb. 7:2) reveals that this translation is always from one language (e.g., Aramaic or Hebrew) into another (e.g., Greek). One possible exception may be Luke 24:27, where Christ explained the Scriptures to the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Therefore, the New Testament does not substantiate the claim that this gift sometimes translates into ecstatic speech.

Sometimes the gift has been referred to simply as the "gift of interpretation." This has led some to believe that it merely refers to a natural ability to learn and translate languages easily, but the gift entails much more, as 1 Corinthians 14:13 makes the purpose of this gift clear: to interpret or translate the gift of tongues to make God's message understandable to other believers. (However, the following verse teaches that God desires the tongues speaker himself to understand as well.)

The gift of interpretation of tongues is unique among the gifts in that it serves no purpose apart from another gift, namely, speaking in tongues. Both gifts are mutually dependent upon one another for the church to be edified. As the speaker of tongues does not realize the foreign language he is using, so the interpreter also does not recognize it, except by supernatural enablement from the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the interpretation is just as much a miracle as the exercising of tongues!

**Definition:** The God-given ability to receive by divine revelation and to declare in the language of the church the translation of a message in tongues.

**Characteristics** of the gift of interpretation of tongues:

1. Corollary gift to tongues, always to follow messages in tongues in order to edify the church (1 Cor. 14:5, 13, 27). One with this gift should be identified before a church service which will include tongues.
2. Always translated a foreign language in tongues into the language which the church understood (see *hermeneuo* study above).
3. Not characteristic of all believers, nor even of all who speak in tongues (1 Cor. 12:30).
4. Should be requested of God by those who speak in tongues (1 Cor. 14:13).
5. Can be controlled by voluntarily refraining from speaking (1 Cor. 14:27).
6. Church services should be restricted to one interpretation for each tongues message (1 Cor. 14:27), probably to prevent confusion.

**Scriptural Examples:** Some Corinthian believers (1 Cor. 12:30; 14:27).

**Temporary Nature:** Since the gift of tongues was temporary, it follows that interpretation of tongues was temporary, in accord with the completion of revelation contained in God's Word (Rev. 22:18-19).

**Another Viewpoint:**

The gift exists today and "when the tongue was a foreign language, would be the ability to translate by someone who did not know the language. In the case of ecstatic utterance, the gift would be to interpret the non-linguistic sounds" (Flynn, 180, charismatics).

## Temporary Sign Gift

# Miracles

## Effecting/Working of Miracles/Power, Wonders, Signs

In Lists: 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28, 29

Greek: **dunamis** (δύναμις) "deed of power, miracle, wonder" (BAGD 4.)

NASB: "miracle(s)" (19 times), "power" (80 times), other words (22 times)

**teras** (τέρας) "...omen, wonder" (BAGD)

NASB: "wonders" (16 times, only in the plural and only with semeion)

**semeion** (σημεῖον)

- 1) "the sign or distinguishing mark by which something is known, token, indication" (BAGD 1; cf. 2 Thess. 3:17; 1 Cor. 14:22)
- 2) "a sign consisting of a wonder or miracle, an event that is contrary to the usual course of nature" (BAGD 2.; cf. John 20:31-32);  
NASB: "sign(s)" (74 times), "miracle" (2 times), "distinguishing mark" (1 time)

Of these three Greek words referring to miracles, only the word *dunamis* is used in the specific references to the *gift* of miracles in the NT lists of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:10, 28, 29). However, *teras* and *semeion* are often used together (Acts 2:19, 43; 4:30; 5:12, etc.) and in conjunction with *dunamis*, thus, "miracles, wonders, and signs" (Acts 2:22; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:4). It may be thought that the miracle (*dunamis*) results in a wonder where people marvel (*teras*) for the purpose of an authenticating sign (*semeion*).

Many teachers (including me) have taught that miracles in the Bible occurred only in four time periods: Moses-Joshua, Elijah-Elisha, Daniel, and Jesus-Apostles (e.g., Phillips, *Moody* [July/August 1982]: 72-74). However, few of us teach this now as we see that God has performed miracles throughout Scripture.

**Definition:** "[Performing] an event of supernatural power [*dunamis*], palpable to the senses [*teras*], accompanying the servant of the Lord to authenticate the divine commission [*semeion*]" (Flynn, 161).

**Characteristics** of those with the gift of working miracles:

1. Ability to perform supernatural acts contrary to natural laws, such the immediate blinding of another person (Acts 13:8-11), declaring God's fatal judgment upon another (Acts 5:9-11), and the exorcism of demons (Acts 8:6-7; 19:12).
2. Performing acts that are immediately observable by eyewitnesses—actions that leave no doubt in the minds of others whether an event beyond human capacity occurred (John 9:7-9).
3. Although the miracle is obvious, it does not necessarily cause others to always believe (Acts 5:12-18; 6:8ff.; John 20:30-31).
4. Authenticated a commission from God (2 Cor. 12:12) and the salvation message (Heb. 2:3-4).
5. The first of the lesser gifts (1 Cor. 12:28).
6. Can be counterfeited by Satan (2 Thess. 2:9), though not as powerful (Acts 19:13-16).

**Scriptural Examples:** Paul (2 Cor. 12:12), Philip (Acts 8:6-7), Stephen (Acts 6:8)

**Temporary Nature:** Hebrews 2:3-4 (AD 62) indicates that miracles were performed by those who heard Christ to confirm God's salvation. Aorist (past) tenses are used, seeming to indicate that these acts no longer occurred. It should also be said that if someone considers the gifts of miracles and healings temporary this doesn't mean "that *God* does not perform miracles or heal today. He is simply saying that the *gifts* are no longer given because the particular purpose for which they were originally given (i.e., to authenticate the oral message) has ceased to exist" (Ryrie, 87; italics mine).

**Other Viewpoints:**

1. Miracles and the gift of miracles exist today (charismatics, Wagner, 237-238).
2. Miracles and the gift exist only in remote areas approximating New Testament situations where the Bible is unavailable and God's power over demons must be shown (Flynn, 165).
3. God is not doing miracles today, not distributing the gift, and never will (Neighbour, 51—but he has since changed his view).

## Temporary Sign Gift

# Healing

## Gift of Healings, Gifts of Healing

In Lists: 1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30

Greek: **ἰαμα** (ἰαμα) "healing," used by Herodotus with the meaning of remedy (BAGD).

While Vine claims that the verb form of *ἰαμα* is used not only of literal, physical healing (Matt. 15:28; Acts 9:34), but figuratively, referring to spiritual healing (Matt. 13:15; John 12:40; Acts 28:27; Heb. 12:13; 1 Pet. 2:24), a careful examination of the *gift* of healing will show that this gift refers only to physical healing, not spiritual healing. Interestingly, this gift only appears in the plural form in New Testament (i.e., "gifts of healing" or "gift of healings"), perhaps emphasizing the broad scope of physical ailments healed by those with this gift. Some Christians believe that God should heal all believers, but this lacks scriptural support (2 Cor. 12:7-10).

**Definition:** The supernatural ability to miraculously cure any illness, restore health, and even raise the dead apart from natural means.

**Characteristics** of those with the gift of healings (McRae, 69-70, adapted on point "i"):

1. "Healings by our Lord and the apostles were:
  - a. Instantaneous (Mark 1:42)
  - b. Complete (Matt. 14:36)
  - c. Permanent (Matt. 14:36)
  - d. Of constitutional diseases (e.g., leprosy, Mark 1:40), not psychological illnesses
  - e. In unbelievers who exercised no faith and did not even know who Jesus was (John 9:25)
  - f. Not for the purpose of relieving people from their suffering and sickness. If this were so, it would have been cruel and immoral for our Lord to leave the cities, where the sick sought healing, for the solitude of the country (Luke 5:15-16)
  - g. Secondary to preaching the Word of God (Luke 9:6)
  - h. Intended to confirm Him and the apostles as the messengers of God and their message as a Word from God (John 3:2; Acts 2:22; Heb. 2:3, 4)
  - i. Always successful except once when the *disciples'* lack of faith was the cause (Matt. 17:20)
  - j. Even of the dead. The supreme demonstration of this gift was raising the dead (Mark 5:39-43; Luke 7:14; John 11:44; Acts 9:40). If these are the earmarks of the gift of healing, many who claim to have this gift are quickly discredited."
2. Performance of healings which are immediately observable by eyewitnesses—actions which leave no doubt in the minds of others whether an event beyond human capacity occurred.
3. Even public healings do not always necessarily cause others to believe (Acts 3:1-4:4).
4. Second most important of the lesser gifts (1 Cor. 12:28).

**Scriptural Examples:** Peter (Acts 3:6-8; 5:15, 16; 9:40), Philip (Acts 8:6, 7), Paul (Acts 14:8-10; 19:11, 12; 18:8, 9).

**Temporary Nature:** Since the Word of God needs no confirmation as truth, the confirmatory gift of healings is no longer needed today. Perhaps healings may be included under the miracles which had ceased before the writing of the book of Hebrews (2:3-4). Although Paul had this gift, near the end of his life (AD 67) he left his traveling companion Trophimus sick at Miletus without healing him (2 Tim. 4:20b). It seems that God confirmed His message through this gift only in the early days of the church until the NT was completed and that even during Paul's lifetime it may have been passing away (cf. Gary W. Dericksen, "The Cessation of Healing Miracles in Paul's Ministry," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 155 [July-September 1998]: 299-315). Our task, even in remote areas without the written revelation, is to evangelize and teach God's truth more than to rely upon healings. God still heals today, but not through this gift. James 5:16-17 should be our guide for treating sickness today.

**Other Viewpoints:**

1. Both healings and the gift of healings exist today (Charismatics, Wagner, 238-242).
2. Healing and the gift exist today only in remote areas approximating New Testament situations where the Bible is unavailable and God's power over demons must be shown (Flynn, 165).

## Power Evangelism

### I. The Thesis and History: Signs and Wonders

- A. Thesis: “My hope and goal is to provide a new perspective on old information—a new understanding of biblical accounts of the supernatural, and how they apply to us today...it is the actual *doing* the works of Christ—including signs and wonders—that is intended to be a part of the normal Christian life” (John Wimber, *Power Evangelism*, 11, emphasis his).
- B. History: Twentieth Century Charismatic Phenomena in Three Stages:

	<i>First Wave</i>	<i>Second Wave</i>	<i>Third Wave</i>
<i>Names</i>	Pentecostalism	Neo-Pentecostalism Charismatic Renewal	Signs & Wonders Movement Wimber Movement Vineyard Movement Power Evangelism Power Encounter Movement ("Charismatic" term avoided)
<i>Key Leaders</i>	Charles Parham (TX) William Seymour (CA)	Dennis Bennett (Episcopal priest)	John Wimber C. Peter Wagner (Fuller) Jack Deere
<i>Historical Beginnings</i>	1901 (Parham) <b>1906</b> (Seymour) 1914 (AOG)	1959 (Roberts) <b>1960</b> (Bennett) 1967 (Catholics)	1979 (Wimber's experience) 1985 (Wimber's book) 1993 (Deere's book)
<i>Denomination Origin</i>	Holiness (Sectarian)	Mainline & Catholic (Ecumenical)	Evangelical + Charismatic (Church planting/infiltration)
<i>Social Class</i>	Poor, black	Middle, white	Middle-Upper, white
<i>Major Center</i>	Azusa Street Mission	St. Mark's Episcopal	Vineyard Church
<i>Origin</i>	Los Angeles, CA	Van Nuys, CA	Anaheim, CA
<i>Worship Style</i>	Emotional excess Spontaneity "Spirit of Confusion"	Orderliness Formal "The Quiet Spirit"	Free with Emotion Informal "The Involved Spirit"
<i>Results: New...</i>	Forms of worship (dance, theater, hymnody, singing in tongues)	Social experiences (small groups, innovative disciple- ship, community)	Interest in Holy Spirit (prayer, Bible study, meditation, fasting, spiritual warfare)

## II. The Man: John Wimber

- A. Frustration with carnal Christianity (lack of the miraculous)
- B. “Even as a successful pastor, I remained uneasy, always sensing the gap between the early disciples’ experience as they spread the gospel of the kingdom of God, and what my congregation experienced” (p. 15).
- C. In 1974 he resigned as co-pastor of Yorba Linda Friends Church to become founding head of the Department of Church Growth at what is now called the Charles E. Fuller Institute of Evangelism and Church Growth in Pasadena, California. At this time he also became an adjunct professor at Fuller Theological Seminary’s School of World Mission in Pasadena, California. From 1981-1986 Wimber taught the course at Fuller called “MC:510 The Miraculous and Church Growth” with C. Peter Wagner, professor of Church Growth. The “exorcisms,” “healings,” and “words of knowledge” in the course led to it being canceled.
- D. For many years Wimber pastored the Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Anaheim, California (near Disneyland!) until his death in 1997. His first experience of a “power encounter” at the church was shortly after he began to pastor the church in 1979 (pp. 36-37)

## III. The Arguments (summarizing some chapters of *Power Evangelism*)

- A. Dependence upon the kingdom theology of George Eldon Ladd’s *A Theology of the New Testament* and *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. Simply stated, this thesis is that “two kingdoms, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan, are in conflict, and Christians have been drafted in Christ’s army to do battle against Satan” (p. 97).
- B. The Power Encounter
  - 1. Definition: “a visible, practical demonstration that Jesus Christ is more powerful than the false gods or spirits worshipped or feared by a people group” (p. 29 [quoting Wagner])
  - 2. Scriptural examples: Christ exorcising a demon-possessed boy (Mark 1:21-28), Elijah’s confrontation with the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18), Paul and Barnabas’ revealing of secret sins (Acts 13:6-12).
  - 3. “Among primitive peoples, there is the need to see the superior power of the gospel demonstrated for them to believe” (p. 30).
  - 4. Commenting on the bestowal of the gift of tongues at Pentecost, he writes, “Often a power encounter that leads to conversion occurs first in those who are evangelizing, then in those who are evangelized” (p. 35).
  - 5. The power encounter generally involves praying over a person who falls to the ground and gets converted to Christ (p. 38), resulting in fear among the unbelieving (p. 39). At times this is accompanied by a revelation of specific sins in the unsaved (p. 40).
- C. Power Evangelism
  - 1. Definition: “By power evangelism I mean a presentation of the gospel that is rational but also transcends the rational. The explanation of the gospel comes with a demonstration of God’s power through signs and wonders. Power evangelism is a spontaneous, Spirit-inspired, empowered presentation of the gospel. Power evangelism is that evangelism which is preceded and undergirded by supernatural demonstrations of God’s presence... in words of knowledge..., healing, prophecy, and deliverance from evil spirits” (p. 46).
  - 2. He cites several statistics of many who “trust Christ” but never become church members and concludes, “Although there is always a need for more *workers* to reap the harvest, the current situation in Western societies indicates a need also for more *powerful* ways of reaching people with the gospel” (p. 50; emphasis mine). Thus, the power evangelism

which generally happens in non-Western societies is also needed to combat the secularism, rationalism, materialism and mechanism in Western countries like the USA.

3. Wimber feels that Christian growth encompasses three elements: intellectual growth about God, character growth, and growth in faith for miracles (p. 54). This third element is lacking in most believers, although the charismatic churches worldwide have incredible church growth because of this element.
4. "Since 1978 the Vineyard Christian Fellowships have grown to include 140 congregations, mostly in the United States and England, with over 40,000 members. The majority of our members are new converts (mostly young people) who have experienced a power encounter" (p. 55).
- D. Divine Appointments are arranged by God for all who are sensitive to His voice. This means that God specifically tells believers what to do and say, as well as where to go to minister to specific people through a "word of knowledge."
- E. Signs and Wonders and Worldviews: The Western worldview is anti-supernatural, which has caused doubt about signs and wonders until recent years.
- F. Answering the question "What Shall I Do?" (chap. 10), Wimber suggests three applications:
  1. "Go home and be one": make it a regular practice to pray over people for healing (p. 148).
  2. "Disciples of Jesus first": get discipled in power evangelism by someone experienced in this area, read "good Christian literature," and go to conferences; but first be a disciple of Jesus to not miss out on "the opportunity to receive his lordship in our hearts" (p. 150).
  3. "Waiting on God": "allowing him to speak, act, lead—always yielding our right to control whatever situation we're in. There is something very simple, almost childlike, about power evangelism. God gives impressions, and we act on them. If he does not speak to us, then we wait—something difficult for action-oriented Western people to do" (p. 150).

#### IV. Bibliography (see the sources listed in the syllabus for this course)

#### V. Specific Errors of the "Signs and Wonders" Movement

- A. As a whole, the movement faults reason and exalts experience. Wimber prefers to cite stories of unbelievers won to Christ through the miraculous rather than to provide a biblical theology of miracles. His writings lack any systematized theology (though Jack Deere has helped to fill in the void somewhat here).
- B. Wagner's approach to church growth counts only *bodies* (outward, quantitative) and must also include *spiritual* growth (inward, qualitative) to be complete (Ken L. Sarles, "An Appraisal of the Signs and Wonders Movement," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 145 [January-March 1988]: 59).
- C. Wimber does not recognize the transitional nature of the Book of Acts. He assumes that what happened in Acts should be the normal Christian experience today. Even what he claims to be the norm for the Book of Acts is not true. "Eight times in Acts, powerful, effective evangelism is directly related to miraculous signs. But on twenty-two other occasions, there is no such link. In other words, the common feature of all apostolic evangelism is the *spoken message* (the kerygma)" (Donald Bridges, *Power Evangelism and the Word of God* [Eastbourne, England: Kingsway, 1987], 232).
- D. Wimber believes that since signs and wonders were abundant in Scripture, they should be commonplace today. But why must this be so? Why must we assume that because God worked one way in the past, He must work in the same way today?

- E. The cessation view of gifts (i.e., that some passed away) is supported on several fronts:
1. Apostles & Prophets: Few, if any, Protestants believe in apostolic succession. Since the gift of apostleship passed away in the first century, is it not possible that other gifts also were temporary? That no-one is willing to claim prophetic revelations equal with Scripture today is evidence that they believe the gift of prophecy ceased as well.
  2. Experience: Church history bears out the cessation of the miraculous gifts, except for a few alleged instances—especially among heretical sects. “Why then is there such a dearth of evidence if the gifts continued throughout church history?” (Sarles, 73).
  3. Likeness to Biblical Miracles: No one today has yet demonstrated an ability to perform miracles at will like those performed by the apostles. “Do missionaries blind their opponents as Paul did? Do church leaders discern hypocrisy and pronounce immediate death as in Acts 5:1-11? Do evangelists amaze an entire city with miracles as did Philip (8:5-8)? Are they then taken to another place of ministry by the Holy Spirit (vv. 39-40)? Are entire multitudes healed by merely being in the shadow of the healer (5:15)? Do prophets give specific prophecies which come to pass soon after (11:27-28)?” (Edgar, “Cessation,” 376—or p. 74 in these notes).
  4. Several other passages support the idea of temporary gifts (Eph. 2:20; Heb. 2:3-4). For many additional verses see Edgar’s article, 379-83.
- F. Wimber teaches that all Spirit-filled Christians should be performing miracles. However, the New Testament shows that only the apostles (2 Cor. 12:12) and very few others (e.g., Philip) could perform miracles.
- G. The teaching that growth in faith for miracles (his third and most emphasized area where believers should grow) produces more spiritual Christians has not been shown. While charismatic churches are growing faster than non-charismatic, this is not necessarily accompanied by true discipleship. Jesus confronted crowds that sought not Him but either a glimpse of the miraculous or bread for their stomachs. Oftentimes today people substitute a craving for the supernatural for a faith in the Bible alone.
- H. Wimber assumes that power encounters always produce faith in unbelievers, but Scripture does not bear this out (1 Kings 18; John 11; Acts 4:16-17).
- I. “The greatest demonstration of God’s supernatural power is the inner transformation of human character in spite of outward circumstances” (Sarles, 81).
- J. The emphasis upon signs and wonders exalts these spiritual gifts above the more important gifts (1 Cor. 12:28).

## VI. Application

- A. Ask whether you are willing to believe God based upon faith without seeking a sign: “For we walk by faith and not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7). Also, recognize that Jesus Himself noted that “an evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign” (Matt. 12:39).
- B. Know and use the spiritual gift which God has already given you. (Complete the Spiritual Gifts Inventory and Worksheet).

## Temporary Gift Study Guide

For the Gift of \_\_\_\_\_

**Scriptural Examples** (Who in the New Testament may have had this gift? List the Scripture references and their names.)

**Definition** (From the above passages, how would you define this gift? What is it?)

**Characteristics** (What may be some common personal traits of those having this gift?)

**Temporary Nature** (Which passages of Scripture may indicate that this gift fulfilled its purpose in the first century?)

**Other Viewpoints** (What differing perspectives are you familiar with regarding this gift? How would you evaluate them?)



## Permanent Gift Study Guide

### For the Gift of \_\_\_\_\_

**Scriptural Examples** (Who in the New Testament may have had this gift? List Scripture references and their names.)

**Definition** (From the above passages and your own knowledge and past experience, how would you define this gift? What is it?)

**Characteristics** (What may be some common personal traits of those having this gift? What type of person is he/she?)

**Misunderstandings** (From the "Characteristics" section above, what may be some wrong perceptions by those without this gift as they view the gifted person's traits?)

**Personal Examples** (Whom do you know that may have this gift?)

**Scriptural Commands** (How are **all** Christians to obey commands which are associated with his gift? List Scripture references and the commands.)

**Ministry Opportunities** (Do you know of any specific areas of service where someone with this gift could be used?)

**Personal Application** (The Key: Be *very* specific)

- 1) How can you encourage someone else who may have this gift? Specify the person's name and your specific strategy.
- 2) If this gift may be a spiritual gift of yours, where can you begin to use this gift to build up the Body of Christ?
- 3) If this is not a spiritual gift of yours, what specific commands associated with this gift should you begin to obey, and how?

## How Many Gifts Does Each Believer Have?

### Support for the “One Gift” Position (Gothard, “Understanding Spiritual Gifts,” 7)

1. The word “gift” always appears in the singular wherever the Scripture refers to the giftedness of a specific Christian:
  - a. “Do not neglect your *gift*...” (1 Tim. 4:14; *italics mine*).
  - b. “And for this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the *gift* of God which is in you...” (2 Tim. 1:6 NASB; *italics mine*).
  - c. “As each one has received a special *gift*, employ *it* in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Pet. 4:10 NASB; *italics mine*).
2. Gifts are compared to the parts of a body, each with its own purpose (1 Cor. 12:12f.).
3. Each person is to concentrate fully on the gift God has given him (Rom. 12:3-8). This would not be possible if he had more than one gift.

### Support for the “Multiple Gift” Position

1. The passages above (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Pet. 4:10) do not specifically state that each believer has only *one* gift. They only say that every Christian does have a gift, or at best that Timothy had only one gift (but see below for more on this).
2. We must be careful not to stretch the symbolic language of 1 Corinthians 12 too far in its implications. Even if we do, just as each part of the body may have several purposes (e.g., the mouth can eat, speak, and kiss), so too may the same be said of individuals in the church body.
3. Romans 12:6 does not state that each Christian is to “concentrate fully on the gift God has given him.” The NIV renders it, “We have different gifts, according to the grace given us...” Verses 6-8 show only various ways in which believers are to exercise their gift(s).
4. Scripture seems to mention several individuals who had more than one gift:
  - a. Paul prophesied (Acts 18:8), taught (Acts 18:11), exhorted (Acts 14:22) and had a pastor’s heart (Philemon 8-20).
  - b. Timothy had the gifts of pastor-teacher (Phil. 2:19-22) and service (1 Thess. 2:7-9).
  - c. Dorcas is characterized by the ability to give, serve, and show mercy (Acts 9:36, 39).
  - d. Barnabas may have been gifted in teaching (Acts 11:26), evangelism (Acts 13:49f.), pastor-teacher (Acts 9:26-27), exhortation (Acts 4:36b), faith (Acts 11:24), and giving (Acts 4:36-37).

**Conclusion:** The arguments better support the multiple gift view. This does not mean that each Christian does have multiple gifts. It only allows for this possibility.

For gifts which are sometimes confused with one another due to their similarities, please consult pages 66-67.

## Problem Passages

### **“But earnestly desire the greater gifts...” (1 Cor. 12:31b; cf. 14:1)**

#### 1. Problems:

- a. Why would Paul encourage us to seek to *obtain* certain gifts in light of teaching that the Holy Spirit decides the gifts each believer receives (1 Cor 12:11,18)?
- b. What is meant by “the greater gifts”?

#### 2. Solution:

- a. Paul doesn’t say that the “desiring” relates to *obtaining* certain gifts. It is actually unstated and must be supplied.
- b. Paul is not commanding *individuals* (this is not second person singular—“you”) but the *church* as a whole (it is second person plural—“you all”).
- c. Therefore, this is a command not for individuals to ask for specific gifts but for the church to *emphasize* the most important gifts (just mentioned in order of importance in verse 28).

### **“... I long to see you that I may impart some spiritual gift to you...” (Rom. 1:11)**

#### 1. Problem: Can Paul really “dish out” spiritual gifts contrary to 1 Corinthians 12:12,18?

#### 2. Solution:

- a. Apostles could not distribute spiritual gifts, so Paul must mean that he desired to: (a) exercise his *own* spiritual gift(s) on their behalf, or (b) bestow upon them other spiritual favors (i.e. blessings).
- b. Even if apostles could grant certain gifts, since there exist no more apostles today, this verse would not be a problem for the modern church.

### **“Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery” (1 Tim. 4:14; cf. 2 Tim. 1:6).**

#### 1. Problems:

- a. This is a similar problem as in Romans 1:11 above (could Paul distribute gifts?).
- b. What is “prophetic utterance” and are some gifts bestowed through prophetic utterance?

#### 2. Solution:

- a. Since this “spiritual gift” was given in connection with Timothy’s ordination it is better understood as an “awareness of his own abilities” (*Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 2:750), referring to his new ministry as pastor-teacher.
- b. The nature of a “prophetic utterance” is explained in detail elsewhere (notes, 23-25) as an inerrant message from God equal in authority to Scripture. Since hardly anyone today claims such authority, this issue is also rarely (if ever) relevant for our day.

## Gifts and Ministries

Spiritual Gift	A God-given ability to...	Ministries of Service
<b>Teaching</b>	Study and communicate the Bible with clarity	Elder, Bible college lecturer, author, teacher in parachurch, care group, Sunday School, etc.
<b>Evangelism</b>	Proclaim the gospel with ease and conversions, and to train others in sharing with the lost	Witnessing one-on-one and in Bible studies, prisons, etc.; itinerant preaching; writing tracts; films
<b>Pastor-Teacher</b> Shepherding	Shepherd (guard, comfort, lead) and feed (teach, exhort) a group of believers	Care group or youth group leader, Christian psychologist, pastor, letter writing
<b>Exhortation</b> Encouragement Counseling	Apply Scripture to people's lives to lead them into God's will	Marriage or family counselor, youth advisor, follow-up, psychologist, home visitation
<b>Administration</b> Leadership, Ruling Organization Management	Preside over groups to achieve objectives with wisdom and organization	Organize & implement events, chair committees, SS superintendent, church/parachurch administrator
<b>Faith</b> Vision	See what God wants done and do it despite obstacles	Launch ministries: music team, training institute, Bible school, building project, missions, churches
<b>Giving</b> Contribution	Provide money or things for God's work with joy, wisdom, and generosity	Give to church, the poor, missions, special projects, establish foundations
<b>Service</b> Helps Ministering	Provide practical help in behind-the-scenes ways to assist up-front ministries	Hospitality, music, crafts, preparing Lord's table, deacon, custodian, flowers, secretarial, etc.
<b>Showing Mercy</b> Compassion Lovingkindness Sympathy	Provide understanding, sympathy, and compassion to those suffering physically or emotionally	Caring for sick, afflicted, orphans, widows, new or unwed mothers, divorcees, imprisoned, etc.

Passages where found: Rom. 12:5-7; 1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28-30; Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 4:10

## Speaking Gifts Comparison Chart

	Teaching	Evangelism	Pastor-Teacher	Exhortation
<b>Shares...</b>	Biblical Learning	Faith & Testimony	Heart & Bible	Optimism
<b>Need Met in Recipients...</b>	Scriptural Truth	Salvation & Equipping for Evangelism	Shepherding	Encouragement
<b>Sensitive to Needs...</b>	Doctrinally	for Conversion	Spiritually (overall needs)	Spiritually (specific needs)
<b>Ministers to Those Needing...</b>	Instruction	Saving Faith	General Spiritual Direction	Urging in Practical Steps
<b>General Trait:</b>	Accuracy in the Word	Heart for the Lost	Shepherd Heart	Uplifts Others

The New Testament does not specifically designate which gifts are “speaking gifts” and “serving gifts” as such. However, immediately following Peter’s encouragement for each believer to be involved in using his or her spiritual gift in the body of Christ (1 Pet. 4:10) the Apostle addresses two categories of believers concerning their spiritual gifts. In 1 Peter 4:11 he writes,

*If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen. (NIV)*

Therefore, since these general classifications do exist, it will be helpful to study each gift to determine under which category it fits best. Does each gift primarily involve a ministry of *declaring* the Word of God (“speaking gifts”) or *assisting* those who declare the Word (“serving gifts”)?

It seems that the four “speaking gifts” in the chart above best describe ministries of *proclaiming* the Word (as opposed to ministries which indirectly *help* the proclamation of the Word). All four gifts would be nearly impossible without verbal communication. For this reason they are classified in this study as “speaking gifts.”

## Teaching vs. Evangelism

**Directions:** This little mini-quiz is just to get you thinking about the gifts of teaching and evangelism. Match each of the following characteristics with the gift of teaching, evangelism, both or neither! (Oh, yes—Be sure to do this with a partner!!!)

<u>Teaching</u>	<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Evangelism</u>
1.	Generally has an itinerant (traveling) ministry	
2.	Apt at explaining salvation clearly	
3.	Communicates the whole Word of God	
4.	Relates better with unbelievers than the other gift	
5.	Primarily a speaking gift	
6.	Loves ice cream at church socials	
7.	Ministers mostly to large groups	
8.	Generally is a young Christian	
9.	Has the deeper burden for the lost	
10.	Concern for the accuracy of words	

## Permanent Speaking Gift

# Teaching

In Lists: Romans 12:7; Ephesians 4:11 (with pastoring); 1 Corinthians 12:28, 29

Greek: **didaskalia** (διδασκαλία) "the act of *teaching, instruction* " (BAGD 1.)

Teaching is mentioned in virtually all of the lists of spiritual gifts in the New Testament. (Swindoll says it is in **every** list.) Therefore, its frequent occurrence in the lists and the fact that the gifted teacher declares God's Word make it one of the most important of the spiritual gifts.

Before the New Testament was completed at the end of the first century, teachers could only expound from the Old Testament. Perhaps the best explanation regarding how they knew what to teach is that God granted them another (revelatory) gift, the "word of knowledge" (1 Cor. 12:8). See the word of knowledge handout for a detailed explanation of this gift.

"A person with the gift of teaching will be marked by two distinct characteristics. He will have a keen interest in the personal study of the Word and in the disciplines involved in studying the Scriptures. These may include language study, principles of interpretation, methods of Bible study, history, geography and theology. Also, he will have the capacity to communicate clearly the truths and applications of the Word so that others learn and profit. After you have heard a 'teacher' teach, your response should be, 'I see what he means.'...Do not confuse natural talent with the spiritual gift. Happy is the case when they overlap in the same person, but we should never assume that one is qualified to teach Sunday School because she is a public schoolteacher" (McRae, 48, 49). Teachers without the spiritual gift have difficulty communicating **spiritual** truth.

"The gifted teacher is not necessarily more intelligent than others, but continues to advance in his/her knowledge and absorption of Biblical truth. Accuracy and clarity accompany this gift" (Swindoll, 4).

**Definition:** "The ability to communicate the Scriptures with clarity, ease, wisdom, and efficiency... explains God's Word with understanding" (Swindoll, 4).

**Characteristics** more prominent in those **with** the gift of teaching (Gothard, adapted from "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 3):

1. The belief that teaching is foundational to others' gifts (Acts 2:42).
2. An emphasis on the accuracy of words (Gal. 3:16).
3. A testing of the knowledge of those who teach them.
4. A delight in research to validate truth (Luke 1:4).
5. The validating of new information by established systems of truth (Luke 1:1-3).
6. The presentation of truth in a systematic sequence (Luke 1:1-3).
7. A resistance to Scripture taken out of context.

**Misunderstandings** of those **without** the gift of teaching (Gothard, "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 3):

1. The emphasis on the accuracy of... interpretation may appear to neglect its...application.
2. The research of others may appear to be dependent upon more than the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit (through meditation).
3. The use of knowledge in testing others may appear to be pride of learning.
4. The concern to impart details of research may appear unnecessary to those listening.
5. The need to be objective in research may appear to lack warmth and feeling when speaking.

**Scriptural Examples:** Apostles (Acts 2:42; 4:18; 5:21, 25, 42), Antioch Men (13:1), Paul & Barnabas (11:26; 15:35), Apollos (18:24-26), Paul (18:11; 19:10; 20:20; **28:30-31**)

**Scriptural Commands:** Matt. 28:19-20; **Col. 3:16**; 2 Tim. 2:2; Tit. 2:3; Heb. 5:12

**Ministry Opportunities:** Sunday School teacher (in any age group), seminary or Bible college professor, pastor, elder, small group Bible study leader, growth group leader, author, etc.  
Permanent Speaking Gift

# Evangelism

## Evangelist

In Lists: Ephesians 4:11

Greek: **euangelistes** (εὐαγγελιστής) "*preacher of the gospel, evangelist*" (BAGD)

- This noun is found only three times in the NT (Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5).
- "Lit., a messenger of good (*eu*, good, *angelos*, messenger), denotes a preacher of the Gospel" (Vine); "*a bringer of good tidings, an evangelist*" (Thayer)

Whereas the gift of teaching is a ministry among the **saved**, the evangelism gift is directed primarily to the **unsaved**. However, God also desires those with this gift to equip other members of the Body for this work of service (Eph. 4:11-12). Exercising this gift can be either public (cf. Philip in Acts 8:5-6, 12) or private (cf. Philip in Acts 8:26-40). However, in the New Testament personal evangelism is the rule, and mass evangelism the exception. Perhaps some with the gift of evangelism minister better with groups while others with the gift are more effective with individuals.

**Definition:** The ability both to proclaim the gospel with ease resulting in conversions, and to train others in effectively sharing Christ with the lost.

**Characteristics** more prominent in those **with** the gift of evangelism:

1. The ability to present the gospel easily, confidently, and clearly (Acts 8:30).
2. A conviction about praying especially for lost (Rom. 10:1).
3. Witnesses unusual success in being used to bring others to Christ (Acts 8:6, 12, 38).
4. An ability to share the gospel frequently and with many kinds of people (Acts 8:5, 12, 30).
5. A keen insight in proper methods of presenting the gospel (Acts 8:30).
6. An interest in and an unusual ability in relating to unbelievers and new Christians.
7. Knows how non-Christians think and feel, so spends time with them and is accepted by them.
8. An unusual responsiveness to the Spirit's promptings to share Christ on the spot (Acts 8:30).
9. An itinerant ministry, or one with many non-Christian contacts (Acts 8:5, 12, 30, 40).
10. A desire to encourage and equip others in effectively sharing their faith (Eph. 4:11-12).
11. Views evangelism as the Christian's highest priority (1 Cor. 9:19-23).
12. Experiences an unusually great joy in seeing others come to know Christ as Savior.

**Misunderstandings** of those **without** the gift of evangelism:

1. Excitement in sharing personal witnessing victories may be judged by others as being proud of "successes" in evangelism.
2. Witnessing to those with whom follow-up is unlikely may appear as insensitive to their need for follow-up.
3. Sensitivity to methodology in presenting the gospel may seem to others as over-meticulous.
4. Systematic follow-up of new believers (e.g., using the same materials for all new Christians) may be viewed as over-simplistic.
5. Desire to "move on" after a group has been evangelized may appear as having left too soon.
6. Conviction in maintaining evangelism as his/her highest priority may be taken as callousness to other areas of spiritual service.
7. Frequent association with non-Christians may be viewed as worldliness (adapting their lifestyle). Jesus was also misunderstood in this respect as being a "friend of sinners."

**Scriptural Examples:** Philip (Acts 8:5-6, 12, 26-40; 21:8), Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:4—14:1), Peter (Acts 2:37-41)

**Scriptural Commands:** Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; 2 Tim. 4:5

**Ministry Opportunities:** Training Christians in evangelism methods; preaching at evangelistic outreaches, camps, universities; door-to-door, hospital and institutional visitation; films, Home Bible studies, letter writing, music, phoning, prison ministry, radio, TV, tracts, illusion.



## Contrasting the Pastor-Teacher and Exhorter

Those with the gifts of pastor-teacher and exhorter have many common traits, which often cause these gifts to be confused. Both counsel, both teach to some extent, both are definitely relational, and both involve speaking (are speaking gifts).

However, for the sake of clarification, several differences exist between the two:

	<b><u>Pastor-Teacher</u></b>	<b><u>Exhorter</u></b>
<b>Duration of Ministry to an Individual</b>	<b>Long-term</b>	<b>Short-term</b>
<b>Type of Person Ministered to</b>	<b>“All” —broad</b>	<b>“Movers” —narrow</b>
<b>Number of People Ministered to</b>	<b>Group Shepherding (this includes individuals)</b>	<b>Individual</b>
<b>Attitude Towards “Slow Movers”</b>	<b>Patience</b>	<b>Less Patient</b>
<b>Teaching Process</b>	<b>Scripture to Experience</b>	<b>Experience to Scripture</b>
<b>Emphasis Concerning the Word of God</b>	<b>Instruction</b>	<b>Application</b>
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>

## Permanent Speaking Gift

## Pastor-Teacher

### Shepherding, Pastor, Pastoring, Being a Pastor

In Lists: Ephesians 4:11

Greek: **poimen** (ποιμήν) "pastor" (only once in the New Testament in Ephesians 4:11; BAGD)  
"shepherd" (17 times in the New Testament; BAGD)

verb: **poimaino** (ποιμαίνω) "herd, tend, (lead to) pasture" (BAGD), "to feed" (Thayer)

The Greek construction of "pastors and teachers" in Ephesians 4:11 reveals that this is a reference to only one gift. The gift of pastor-teacher is the only "dual gift" in the church, and, though every teacher need *not* be a pastor, every pastor *must* be a teacher. Thus, the responsibilities of those with this gift are two-fold:

**Shepherding:** provision, protection, warning, encouragement, leadership

**Teaching:** study and research, instructing in the Word (doctrines, principles, applications)

One might say that those with the gift of pastor-teacher also seem to possess some qualities characteristic of those with gifts in teaching, exhortation, and showing mercy. When these traits are lacking, a pastor without this gift will have a difficult time in his ministry. Yet being a pastor is only one ministry possible to those who have this gift (see below).

**Definition:** "The ability to shepherd (guard, comfort, lead the flock) along with feeding (teaching, instructing, exhorting) them as their undershepherd" (1 Pet. 5:1-4; Swindoll, 7).

**Characteristics** more prominent in those *with* the gift of pastor-teacher:

1. Helps Christians wandering spiritually to find their place back in the fellowship (Gal. 6:1).
2. A concern regarding false cults which may lead believers astray (Phil. 3:2).
3. An ease at expressing warmth to individuals (Phil. 2:20).
4. The foresight to foresee potential personal problems of others (Philemon 12).
5. The ability to be a sensitive listener before offering advice (Acts 9:26-27).
6. A satisfaction in *being* with people as opposed to *doing* things with them.
7. Often is entrusted with personal information from others which they share with few people.
8. An ability to abhor one's sin while also accepting him as a special individual (Philemon 10).
9. Biblically counsels individuals whose problems result from Scriptural violations.
10. A concern which enables people to sense consistent support during difficult times (Phil. 2:22).
11. The qualities of one with the gift of teaching (see teaching gift handout).

**Misunderstandings** of those *without* the gift of pastor-teacher:

1. Seeking to reconcile straying believers may appear as neglecting more consistent members.
2. Expressing warmth to others may arouse suspicion on their part.
3. Verbalizing future pitfalls to others may be taken by them as a negative or judgmental spirit.
4. Focusing on *others'* needs may appear as a lack of *personal* struggles.
5. Consistent acceptance of and attention to those with habitual sin patterns may appear to others as an unproductive use of time.
6. Verbalizing how Scriptural violations caused problems may be seen as over-simplistic.

**Scriptural Examples:** Barnabas (Acts 9:26-27), Timothy (Phil. 2:19-22), Epaphras (Col. 1:7; 4:12-13), Paul (Philemon 8-20)

**Scriptural Commands:** Gal. 6:1-2; 2 Thess. 3:14-15; John 21:16

**Ministry Opportunities:** Youth counselors, Christian psychologists, pastors, Home Bible study (nurture/growth) group leaders, letter writing.

## Permanent Speaking Gift

# Exhortation

## Encouragement, Admonishment, Paraclete, Counseling

In Lists: Romans 12:8

Greek: **parakaleo** (παρακαλέω) **para** "beside" **kaleo** "to call," "...call to one's side..." (BAGD) -a **verb** meaning "to call on, entreat...to admonish, exhort, to urge one to pursue some course of conduct (always *prospective*, looking to the future, in contrast to the meaning to comfort, which is *retrospective*, having to do with trial experienced)" (Vine).

**paraclete** (παράκλητος) one "...called to one's side [aid]" (Thayer); "one who appears in another's behalf, mediator, intercessor, helper" (BAGD); the **noun** form of **parakaleo** is used of God the Father ("God of all comfort"; 2 Cor. 1:3-7), Jesus, the "Advocate" (1 John 2:1) and the Holy Spirit, or "Helper," "Comforter" (John 14:16).

"Exhorters possess a marked ability to encourage, comfort and assure other believers as well as point out practical areas of need and disobedience. While the teacher communicates facts and truths of the Word of God, the exhorter is able to encourage the hearer to act upon that which he has heard. The teacher gives the *what* of the Scripture, while the exhorter gives the *how*" (Swindoll, 5).

### A Noteworthy Scriptural Example - Barnabas (Original name: "Joseph")

- 1) Renamed Barnabas, meaning "Son of Exhortation/Encouragement" (Acts 4:36-37)
- 2) Endorsed Saul, an unwelcome convert (Acts 9:26-28; Gal. 2:9)
- 3) Accepted alien believers, the Gentiles (Acts 11:19-24)
- 4) Enlisted Paul, a promising teacher (Acts 11:25-26)
- 5) Developed Paul as a gifted assistant (Acts 12:25; 13:42ff)
- 6) Restored Mark, a youthful deserter (Acts 13:13; 15:36-41; 2 Tim. 4:11)

Summary: Barnabas never wrote a word in the NT, but he encouraged Paul, who wrote at least 13 of our New Testament letters, and Mark, the author of our second Gospel (Flynn, adapted, 84-88).

**Definition:** "The ability to appeal for action, *drive home* specific truths from the Scriptures and lead others into an active realization of the will of God for their lives" (Swindoll, 5).

**Characteristics** more prominent in those *with* the exhortation gift (expanded and adapted from Gothard, "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 4):

1. A desire to visualize specific achievement and prescribe precise steps of action (Col. 1:28-29).
2. A tendency to avoid systems of information which lack practical application (Tit. 3:9a).
3. The ability to see how tribulation can produce new levels of maturity (2 Cor. 1:5; 12:9).
4. An ability to discern a person's level in spiritual growth and relate on that level (1 Cor. 3:1).
5. The discovery of insights from experience which can be validated...in Scripture.
6. An enjoyment with those eager to follow steps of action (Acts 11:25-26).
7. A grief when teaching is not accompanied with practical steps of action (Tit. 3:9b).
8. A delight in personal conferences [discussions] that result in new insights.

**Misunderstandings** of those *without* the gift of exhortation (Gothard, "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 4):

1. The emphasis on steps of action may appear to oversimplify the problem.
2. The urgency in giving steps of action may appear as having overconfidence in them.
3. The use of Scripture for practical application may appear to take it out of context.
4. The emphasis on steps of action may appear to disregard the feelings of those being counseled.

**Scriptural Examples:** Barnabas (see above), Paul (Acts 14:22; 1 Thess. 2:11)

**Scriptural Commands:** Col. 3:16; 1 Tim. 4:13; Tit. 2:4; **Heb. 3:13**; 10:25

**Ministry Opportunities:** Counselor, psychologist, visitation, youth advisor, follow-up.

## Serving Gifts Comparison Chart

	Administrations	Faith	Giving	Service	Showing Mercy
<b>Shares...</b>	Organizational Ability	Vision	Possessions	Abilities	Concern
<b>Need Met...</b>	Leadership	Belief	Monetary	Assistance	Understanding
<b>Sensitive to Needs...</b>	Managerially	Visually	Materially	Practically	Emotionally
<b>Ministers to Those Needing...</b>	Structure	Hope	Finances & Material Things	Aid in Everyday Tasks	Comfort
<b>General Trait:</b>	Orderliness	Confidence in God	Generosity	Availability	Compassion

How do we know that these five gifts are those the Scripture refers to when it exhorts "whoever serves..." to use their gifts (cf. 1 Pet. 4:11b)? As stated on the "Speaking Gifts Comparison Chart," the specific "serving gifts" can only be determined by evaluating whether the gift primarily concerns **declaring** the Word of God or **assisting** those who involve themselves in a ministry of the Word.

It seems that the five gifts discussed on this comparison chart more properly fit into the latter category, the "serving gifts." This doesn't mean that no speaking is involved in the use of these gifts, but only that speaking the Word of God doesn't have as important a role as it does with the four "speaking gifts."

Those that have one of these "serving gifts" free up time for those with "speaking gifts" to have more time in their ministries related to the proclamation of the Scriptures. For example, administrators, custodians, and secretaries in the church assist elders, pastors, evangelists and counselors to better use their time in ministering to the needs of others through the Bible. These distinctions would be similar to the work of the seven men who cared for the physical needs of the saints in order to allow the apostles to involve themselves primarily in a ministry of prayer and the Word (cf. Acts 6:1-6).

Permanent Serving Gift

## Administrations

**Administration, Government(s), Leadership,  
Leading, Ruling, Management, Organization**

In Lists: Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:28

Greek: Romans 12:8 **proistemi** (προϊστημι) **pro** “before” **histemi** “to stand” i.e., “to set or place before; to set over...to be a protector or guardian; to give aid” (Thayer); “be at the head (of), rule, direct...manage, conduct” (BAGD 1.).

Greek: 1 Corinthians 12:28 **kubernesis** (κυβερνήσις, verb) “a governing, government” (Thayer); “administration” (BAGD) from **kubernetes** (κυβερνήτης, noun) “captain,” “steersman,” “pilot” (BAGD; Acts 27:11; Rev. 18:17)

“In 1 Corinthians 12:28, 'Administrations' is taken from the term **kubernesis**, meaning the work of serving as a steersman or pilot of a ship. The **kubernetes** steered the ship through rocks and shoals safely to the harbor” (Swindoll, 5).

“The one who has this gift has the unique ability to organize and administer with great ease and efficiency. This person is sensitive to the details involved in matters of organization...the ability to organize and direct toward certain goals would be an essential characteristic of those who have this gift. The gift is usually accompanied with a good measure of common, practical sense and tact in dealing with others, along with personal zeal and an intense concern that matters be handled 'properly and in an orderly manner' (1 Cor. 14:40)” (Swindoll, 5).

**Definition:** “The... ability to preside, govern, plan, organize, and administer with wisdom, fairness, example, humility... confidence, ease and efficiency” (Flynn, 127).

**Characteristics** more prominent in those **with** the gift of administration (Gothard, adapted from “Understanding Your Spiritual Gift,” 5):

1. An ability to see the overall picture and to clarify long-range goals.
2. A motivation to organize that for which he is responsible (Acts 6:1-7).
3. A desire to complete tasks as quickly as possible.
4. An awareness of the resources available to complete a task [knows people's unique gifts].
5. An ability to know what can or cannot be delegated.
6. A tendency to assume responsibility if no structured leadership exists.
7. A willingness to endure reaction from workers in order to accomplish the ultimate task.
8. A fulfillment in seeing all the pieces together and others enjoying the finished product.

**Misunderstandings** of those **without** the gift of administration (Gothard, adapted from “Understanding Your Spiritual Gift,” 5):

1. The ability to delegate responsibility may appear as laziness in avoiding work.
2. The willingness to endure reaction may appear as callousness.
3. The neglect in explaining why tasks need to be done may prompt workers to feel ... misused.
4. The viewing of people as resources may appear that projects are more important than people.
5. The desire to complete tasks swiftly may appear to be insensitive to the schedule, weariness or priorities of workers.

**Scriptural Examples:** Titus (**Tit. 1:5**), the “Seven” (Acts 6:1-7; 21:8), Elders (1 Tim. 5:17). James (Acts 15:1-29, esp. vv. 13-21).

**Scriptural Commands:** **1 Cor. 14:40**; 1 Tim. 3:4, 5, 12

**Ministry Opportunities:** Organizing & implementing church events, projects; chairing boards (e.g., deacon, elder) & committees (e.g., building, C.E.); administrator at churches, Christian colleges, seminaries, organizations; church wedding hostess, Sunday School superintendent.

## Permanent Serving Gift

## Faith

### Vision

In Lists: 1 Corinthians 12:9

Greek: **pistis** (πίστις) "faith," "trust" (BAGD)

Verb: **pistoo** (πιστόω) "feel confidence, be convinced" (BAGD 2.)

"Primarily, firm persuasion, a conviction based upon hearing...is used in the New Testament always of faith in God or Christ, or things spiritual" (Vine).

"Faith is the assurance that the things which God said in His Word are true; and that God will act according to what He has said in His Word. This assurance, this reliance on God's Word, this confidence, is Faith" (George Mueller).

"Faith is believing that something *is* so, when it *isn't* so, so that it will *be* so!" (Anonymous)

**Definition:** "The Spirit-given ability to see something that God wants done and to [be involved in accomplishing it while sustaining] unwavering confidence that God will do it regardless of seemingly insurmountable obstacles" (Flynn, 141).

**Scriptural Definition:** "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Heb. 11:1 NIV).

**Characteristics** more prominent in those **with** the gift of faith:

1. A conviction to pursue God's best in spite of "insurmountable" obstacles (Rom. 4:21).
2. A delight with outward circumstances that cause the meeting of needs to appear humanly impossible.
3. An ability to dream great dreams and tackle great tasks for God (Matt. 17:20).
4. A keen perception in knowing God's will for certain projects--a self-perception of "being in partnership with God" (Rom. 8:31).
5. An ability to thank God in advance as though the answer to prayer was an accomplished fact (John 11:41-42).
6. A focus on the future more than the past.
7. Knowledge of when a *helpless* situation is not a *hopeless* situation.
8. An ignorance of (or unconcern with) the details necessary in order to accomplish the task dreamed about.
9. A high priority placed on believing prayer.
10. An ability to inspire others to trust God for significant things.

**Misunderstandings** of those **without** the gift of faith:

1. Consistent pursuing of projects for God's glory may appear to others as arrogant pursuance of personal goals.
2. Delight with "impossible circumstances" may be viewed as an inability to see things realistically.
3. Convictions regarding what is considered to be God's will (but cannot be validated specifically as His will in Scripture) may appear as over-reliance upon mere personal perceptions.
4. Future mindset may be taken as unconcern with present circumstances.
5. Disinterest with the details involved in the accomplishment of the vision may be viewed as insensitivity by those responsible for the details.

**Scriptural Examples:** Stephen (**Acts 6:5**), Barnabas (Acts 11:24), Philemon (Philem. 5,6)

**Historical Examples:** George Mueller, Bill Bright, Hudson Taylor

**Scriptural Commands:** Rom. 12:3; 1 Cor. 4:2; 2 Cor. 5:7; **Heb. 11:6**

**Ministry Opportunities:** Launch tape ministries within churches; start music teams; establish Bible schools, colleges, or seminaries; open missions or Sunday Schools in neglected areas; begin a Vacation Bible School, Boy's Brigade, or Pioneer Girls; lead others in dreaming God's dreams for building projects, missionary enterprises, and whatever glorifies Him!

## Permanent Serving Gift

## Giving Contribution

In Lists: Romans 12:8

Greek: **metadidomi** (μεταδίδωμι) is from **meta** "among, after, or with" and **didomi** "to give" meaning, "to give a share of," "impart" (Vine; cf. Luke 3:11; Rom. 1:11; Eph. 4:28; 1 Thess. 2:8)

Those with this gift are commanded in Romans 12:8 to give with **haplotes** (ἀπλοτης), translated "liberality" (NASB), "simplicity" (KJV), and "generously" (NIV). It also has the idea of "sincerity, uprightness, frankness...liberality" (BAGD) or perhaps even "joyful eagerness" (Gangel, 83). It is derived from a Greek word meaning "without folds," referring to a piece of cloth unfolded, thus emphasizing openness in giving (Flynn, 117).

**Definition:** "The capacity to give of substance to the work of the Lord or to the people of God consistently, liberally, sacrificially, and with such wisdom and cheerfulness that others are encouraged and blessed" (McRae, 50-51).

**Characteristics** more prominent in those **with** the gift of giving:

1. Alertness to valid needs that may be overlooked by others (Phil. 4:15,16).
2. A willingness to contribute generously and sacrificially of personal possessions, as opposed to giving only of one's excess wealth (2 Cor. 8:3).
3. A forgetfulness of acts of generosity, without false pretense (Acts 5:1-2).
4. An avoidance of public attention for contributions (Matt. 6:1-4).
5. A delight in sharing resources with others while not viewing it as a duty (2 Cor. 9:7).
6. Views resources as belonging to God alone and self as only a steward of those resources.
7. May be wealthy (but most are not; 2 Cor. 8:2), yet does not *love* money (1 Tim. 6:10).
8. A deep realization that God is the provider of personal needs.
9. An enjoyment in meeting needs without pressure appeals (2 Cor. 8:4).
10. A joy when the gift given has been an answer to specific prayer (2 Cor. 8:2).
11. A need to feel a part of the work to which contributions are made.
12. An attempt to give in order to motivate others in giving (2 Cor. 11:9).

**Misunderstandings** of those **without** the gift of giving:

1. The need to focus on the values of personal investments may appear to others as excessive over-attention on temporal values.
2. Contributing sacrificially, generously, and cheerfully may appear to others as motivated by desire for personal recognition.
3. The desire to give in order to increase a ministry's (or person's) effectiveness may be taken as an attempt to control the work (or person).
4. Lack of response to pressure appeals may be interpreted as insensitivity to material needs.
5. Giving in order to encourage others to give may appear as lacking generosity and unnecessary pressure.
6. The accompanying divine material blessing may arouse jealousy on the part of those who are less faithful in giving.

**Scriptural Examples:** Dorcas (**Acts 9:36, 39**), Barnabas & Others (Acts 4:32-37), some Philippians (Phil. 4:14-19), some Macedonians (2 Cor. 8:1-5; 11:9)

**Scriptural Commands:** Mal. 3:8-10; Matt. 6:3, 4; Luke 6:38; **Rom. 12:13**; 1 Cor. 16:2; 1 Tim. 5:4; James 2:15,16

**Ministry Opportunities:** Giving to churches, pastors, evangelists, missionaries, missionary organizations, the poor, special projects (building funds, office needs, Sunday School, etc.); establishing foundations.

## Permanent Serving Gift

# Service

## Serving, Ministering, Helping, Helps

In Lists: Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28

Greek: Romans 12:7 "service" (NASB)

**diakonia** (διακονία, noun) "service, ministering" (Thayer)

**diakoneo** (διακονέω, verb) "wait on someone ...at table" (BAGD 1)

The verb means to serve, wait upon, minister to one, wait at a table, and offer food and drink to guests, supply food and the necessities of life. We get our English word "deacon" from the Greek word **diakonos** (διάκονος).

Greek: 1 Corinthians 12:28 "helps" (NASB)

**antilempsis** (ἀντιλήψις) is **anti** "instead of" plus **lambano** "to take or lay hold of so as to support" (Vine); "helpful deeds" (BAGD).

**Definition:** "The extraordinary ability to serve faithfully behind the scenes in practical ways so as to assist in the work of the ministry" (Swindoll, 4).

"These ministries, though often missed by the public eye, form the *backbone* of an effective local church. They guard the public declaration of the Word from interruption, delay and unnecessary demands. It is to be noted that *all* Christians are to be available to help and assist, but not all are able to do it with unending joy, ease, and efficiency. Most often, these folk are very observant, able to notice needs and take care of them without others having to call their attention to them. They usually loathe the limelight!" (Swindoll, 4-5).

**Characteristics** more prominent in those **with** the gift of service (Gothard, adapted from "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 2):

1. A tendency to feel inadequate and unqualified for spiritual leadership (1 Tim. 4:14-15).
2. The alertness to detect and meet practical needs. Enjoys manual projects (2 Tim. 4:13).
3. The motivation to meet needs as quickly as possible (avoids delegating).
4. The physical stamina to fulfill needs with disregard for weariness (Phil. 2:22).
5. The willingness to use personal funds to avoid delay (1 Cor. 16:17).
6. The desire to sense sincere appreciation and the ability to detect insincerity.
7. The desire to complete a job with evidence of unexpected extra service (Phil. 2:21).
8. An involvement in a variety of activities with an inability to say "no."
9. A preference for short-range projects and frustration with long-range goals (1 Tim. 4:16).
10. A frustration when limitations of time are attached to jobs.

**Misunderstandings** of those **without** the gift of service (Gothard, "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 3):

1. Quickness in meeting needs may appear to be pushy.
2. Avoidance of red tape may result in excluding others from jobs.
3. Their disregard for personal needs may extend to their own family's needs.
4. Eagerness in serving may prompt suspicion of self-advancement.
5. May react to others who do not detect and meet obvious needs.
6. Insistence on serving may appear to be a rejection of being served.
7. Desire to sense sincere appreciation may result in being easily hurt.
8. Quickness to meet needs may interfere with the spiritual lessons God is teaching those with needs.
9. Meeting practical needs may be judged as a lack of interest in spiritual matters.

**Scriptural Examples:** Dorcas (Acts 9:36, 39), Onesimus (Philem. 10-13), Onesiphorus (2 Tim. 1:16-18), Mark (2 Tim. 4:11), Stephanas, Fortunatus, & Achaicus (1 Cor. 16:15-18)

**Scriptural Commands:** John 13:14-15; **Luke 22:26, 27**; 1 Pet. 4:10

**Ministry Opportunities:** Music, hospitality, craftsmanship, artwork, assisting teachers, private intercession, letter-writing, preparing the Lord's supper elements, deacon or church board member, church custodian, flowers, secretarial, construction, kitchen ministry, bus ministry, and *many* more!



Permanent Serving Gift

## Showing Mercy

### Lovingkindness, Compassion, Sympathy

In Lists: Romans 12:8

Greek: **eleeo** (ἐλεέω) "to have mercy or pity... on someone" (BAGD)

"**eleeo** signifies, in general, to feel sympathy with the misery of another, and especially sympathy manifested in act, (a) in the Active Voice, to have pity or mercy one... (b) in the Passive Voice, to have pity or mercy shown one, to obtain mercy" (Vine).

Those with this gift are commanded in Romans 12:8 to show mercy with **hilarotes** (ἡλαρότης), meaning "cheerfulness" (NASB) and "...gladness, graciousness" (BAGD).

"This gift meets the needs of the bereaved, the lonely, the miserable, the depressed and the infirmed. There is far more demonstrated in this gift than the 'milk of human kindness.'

Connected with this gift is the 'inner awareness' of the proper time to speak or remain silent, to visit or stay away, to use the Scriptures or refrain until a more opportune moment, to smile or weep, agree or disagree. It is always done 'with cheerfulness'" (Swindoll, 6).

"Many people shrink from the ill and weak; they consign these people to an institution. In this area of daily life, mercy is a rare virtue. Wherever a person has this gift, he is a great hope for sick and neglected people. To be sure, merciful people are quickly besieged by those in need [so] it is important for all who have this talent to use it" (Grossman quoted by Gangel, 99).

**Definition:** "The ability to demonstrate sympathy, understanding, compassion, patience, and sensitivity toward those who suffer or undergo periods of severe pressure and emotional anxiety" (Swindoll, 6).

**Characteristics** more prominent in those **with** the gift of showing mercy (Gothard, "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 5):

1. The ability to feel an atmosphere of joy or distress in an individual or group.
2. An attraction to and an understanding of people who are in distress (Phil. 2:26).
3. A desire to remove hurts and bring healing to others (Acts 9:36).
4. A greater concern for mental distress than physical distress.
5. An avoidance of firmness unless he sees how it will bring benefit [i.e., a difficulty using discipline, even when it is appropriate and needed].
6. A sensitivity to words and actions which will hurt other people (then a tendency to take up an offense, but to keep it bottled up within).
7. An ability to discern sincere motives in other people.
8. An enjoyment and unity with those who are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.
9. A closing of his spirit to those who are insincere or insensitive.

**Misunderstandings** of those **without** the gift of showing mercy (Gothard, adapted, "Understanding Your Spiritual Gift," 6, adapted):

1. The avoidance of firmness may appear to be weakness and indecisiveness.
2. The sensitivity to the spirit and feelings of others may cause some to feel he is guided by emotions rather than logic.
3. The demonstration of affection and understanding to distressed members of the opposite sex may be easily misinterpreted. (Take care! You must be firm!)
4. The sensitivity to behavior which causes hurts may appear to be taking up another's offense.
5. The ability to detect insincere motives may cause some to feel he/she is hard to get to know.

**Scriptural Examples:** Dorcas (Acts 9:36, 39), Epaphroditus (**Phil. 2:25-30**), Paul, Silas, & Timothy (1 Thess. 2:7-9)

**Scriptural Commands:** Matt. 25:31-40; Luke 10:37; Gal. 6:2; **Col. 3:12**; James 1:27

**Ministry Opportunities:** Caring for and visiting new mothers, unwed mothers, divorcees, the sick, afflicted, orphans, widows, bereaved, imprisoned (in hospitals, homes, prisons, etc.).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Spiritual Gifts Inventory

(cf. Romans notes, 155bb-gg for six pages)

This inventory has been designed not to test your *knowledge* of spiritual gifts, but rather, your interest and experience in *using* your gift(s). Answer each of the following 90 questions according to the scale below. (Record your responses on scratch paper if you want to use this inventory again.) Do not answer what you would **like** to be true for yourself, but what is **actually** true for you. (Be honest!) Should a question ask if you enjoy doing something that you have never experienced, answer according to how much you *think* you would enjoy it. After you have finished, transfer your responses onto the Spiritual Gifts Inventory Worksheet to tabulate your scores. **Do not** record your responses directly on the worksheet so that you can take the inventory objectively.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Never	Very Rarely	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always
(or only once)	(hardly ever)	(infrequently)	(occasionally)	(often)	(or almost always)

1. I feel motivated to study the Bible in order to give an orderly presentation of Scripture.
2. I enjoy giving a public testimony of how Christ changed my life.
3. I like to give of myself even when it causes me inconvenience if it will help other believers grow in their relationship with Christ.
4. I have a warm heart towards people and enjoy "coming alongside them" to encourage growth.
5. I desire to complete tasks and projects as quickly as possible.
6. I have joy in thanking God in advance while praying as if my request was already answered.
7. I delight in donating things to others in the body of Christ.
8. I enjoy helping with practical tasks that need to be done at church.
9. I enjoy going out of my way to help individuals in distress.
10. I am concerned about the accuracy of words in scriptural matters.
11. I feel I need to give people opportunity to become Christians after I share the gospel.
12. I like taking on the responsibility of nurturing new Christians in their spiritual growth.
13. I like helping others with goals and steps of action to develop a deeper commitment to Christ.
14. I find fulfillment in organizing people with various abilities in order to achieve a common goal.
15. I enjoy trusting God for goals even when external circumstances cause the accomplishment of these goals to appear humanly impossible.
16. I am very concerned that my financial investments in God's work be of high quality.
17. I like to volunteer for "behind the scenes" manual tasks such as cleaning, typing, ushering, etc.
18. I feel compelled to console a person who is embarrassed or who needs comfort.
19. I am interested in researching what the Bible says in order to discern the truth concerning what has been presented to me (I carefully evaluate what I'm taught).
20. I like to go where non-Christians often pass or congregate so that I may win them to Christ.
21. I enjoy going out of my way for new people at church in order to make them feel welcome.
22. I enjoy spending time with people who are eager to follow strategies to enable them to change a personal behavior pattern or to pursue a particular goal.
23. I delight in organizing people to accomplish projects (i.e., being used to "see all the pieces come together" and to see others enjoying the finished product).
24. I love to dream great dreams and tackle great tasks for God.
25. I enjoy contributing money or possessions in order to encourage others also to contribute.
26. I can easily sense whether others really appreciate my help with projects.
27. Not only do I feel sympathetic with people experiencing *physical* discomfort, but I also have sympathy with those undergoing *mental* stress.
28. I find that I am willing to be criticized as stubborn or narrow-minded for sticking to God's Word when others' opinions differ from what I see the Bible saying.
29. I am concerned to use the proper approach when giving the gospel to different kinds of people.
30. When a fellow Christian strays from the Lord, I feel compassionate to help him return to Christ.
31. I love conversations which give me insights into how I can better meet people's spiritual needs.
32. I can endure criticism from people under my leadership in order to accomplish the ultimate task.
33. I love praying until God miraculously changes situations (or until something is clearly not His will).
34. I am not greatly concerned that my donations will prevent me from having enough money, so I trust God by contributing sacrificially.

0	1	2	3	4	5
Never (or only once)	Very Rarely (hardly ever)	Seldom (infrequently)	Sometimes (occasionally)	Usually (often)	Always (or almost always)

35. I like to avoid delegating those responsibilities that I think I may be able to do myself.
36. I prefer not to be a firm disciplinarian.
37. I find joy in harmonizing and arranging biblical content.
38. I enjoy encouraging and teaching other Christians how to be more effective in witnessing.
39. I want to know others well so I can most effectively guide them and meet their spiritual needs.
40. When encouraging others, I'm very concerned how that person responds to my efforts to help.
41. I desire to move on to a new challenge after fully completing the previous project.
42. Seeing my vision *accomplished* is more important to me than seeing *details* needed to achieve it.
43. I feel that Christians' offerings should be at least a tithe, but probably more.
44. I delight to assist others with everyday tasks to help them be more effective in their ministries.
45. I sympathize with others so much that I fail to confront them with truth when they need it.
46. I show ability at effectively communicating a spiritual truth that someone else shared with me.
47. I experience a great joy when leading someone to Christ.
48. My experience has shown that others look to me for guidance in their spiritual growth.
49. Believers come to me for Christian counsel because I can apply the Scriptures to their situations.
50. I have an ability to see the overall picture and clarify long-range goals.
51. Others say I have an unusual ability to rely on God's promises despite "impossible" situations.
52. I am "unusually generous" when donating to the Lord's work (i.e., compared to my income).
53. I get asked to assist in practical projects because I like to help and will "go the extra mile."
54. I am very understanding and sympathetic with those experiencing grief and affliction.
55. I have had others comment on how clearly I expound the Scriptures.
56. I find it natural and easy to invite others to commit themselves to Christ as Savior.
57. I can abhor a person's sin while at the same time lovingly accept that person as an individual.
58. I experience grief when teaching lacks practical application (e.g., specific steps of action).
59. I will delegate a responsibility if I can find someone else who can do it better.
60. I can discern projected plans for the future as to whether or not they may be God's will.
61. I have been one of the first to contribute to people who need food, clothing, or money.
62. I recall the likes and dislikes of others which enables me to effectively meet their practical needs.
63. I am able to remove hurts, renew hope and bring healing to others.
64. I continually test others' preaching or teaching with what the Bible says about that subject.
65. I explain the gospel clearly (because I know it well) and confidently (I am bold).
66. I am patient with believers who are making slow progress in their Christian growth.
67. I can easily apply God's truth to a person's circumstances so that he/she is encouraged.
68. I assume leadership in managing if no structured leadership exists, but I'm not domineering.
69. I find it easy to trust God even when others lack confidence in His workings.
70. I need to feel a part of the work to which I contribute financial support.
71. I am very alert to detect and meet small, unnoticed details that require attention.
72. I show much sensitivity to words and actions that may dishearten and hurt others.
73. I have a resistance to scriptural quotations used out of context.
74. Compared to most Christians, I experience unusual success in bringing others to know Christ.
75. I take responsibility to protect weak Christians from influences that may undermine their faith.
76. I can gently rebuke others without condemning or discouraging them.
77. I work well under pressure and get to the heart of the matter quickly to take decisive action.
78. Raising another's expectations that God will do the improbable is an ability that I exercise.
79. I experience great joy when my gift (money or possessions) was an answer to specific prayer.
80. I am easily overextended in helping with a variety of projects because it is difficult to say "no."
81. I naturally sense when others are hurting inside.
82. I tend to see how scriptural truths relate to one another as a whole.
83. I witness to strangers even though I know that I won't be able to follow them up.
84. I can easily express warmth to individuals even though I may not know them very well.
85. I find it easy to call forth the best in others (their potential).
86. I easily discern and employ the abilities and gifts of others to meet practical needs.
87. I have a unusual prayer capacity to tap into God's resources on behalf of others.
88. I can sense when certain appeals for money are not worthy appeals.
89. I get frustrated when time limitations are placed on what I have to do (like this inventory!).
90. I can cheerfully spend time consoling those who need a listening ear.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Spiritual Gifts Inventory Worksheet

### Directions

1. Transfer your answers from the Spiritual Gifts Inventory onto the corresponding blanks below. **Do not** record your responses directly onto this sheet while answering the inventory questions because this will tend to make you more biased in your self-evaluation. The inventory had ten questions for each gift: five related to interest or preference (questions 1-45) and five related to experience or ability (questions 46-90).
2. Add up your scores in the vertical columns to determine a total score for each gift and put each sum on the blank in the **Total Score** line. The highest possible score for each gift is 50.
3. Rate each gift on the **Gift Rating** line by assigning the highest **Total Score** a rating of 1, the second highest a 2, etc. Give tied scores the same rating and go to the next highest score.

1 ____	2 ____	3 ____	4 ____	5 ____	6 ____	7 ____	8 ____	9 ____	
10 ____	11 ____	12 ____	13 ____	14 ____	15 ____	16 ____	17 ____	18 ____	
19 ____	20 ____	21 ____	22 ____	23 ____	24 ____	25 ____	26 ____	27 ____	
28 ____	29 ____	30 ____	31 ____	32 ____	33 ____	34 ____	35 ____	36 ____	
37 ____	38 ____	39 ____	40 ____	41 ____	42 ____	43 ____	44 ____	45 ____	
46 ____	47 ____	48 ____	49 ____	50 ____	51 ____	52 ____	53 ____	54 ____	
55 ____	56 ____	57 ____	58 ____	59 ____	60 ____	61 ____	62 ____	63 ____	
64 ____	65 ____	66 ____	67 ____	68 ____	69 ____	70 ____	71 ____	72 ____	
73 ____	74 ____	75 ____	76 ____	77 ____	78 ____	79 ____	80 ____	81 ____	
82 ____	83 ____	84 ____	85 ____	86 ____	87 ____	88 ____	89 ____	90 ____	
____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	Total Score
____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	Gift Rating
Teaching	Evangelism	Pastor-Teacher	Exhortation	Administration	Faith	Giving	Service	Showing Mercy	
——Speaking Gifts ——				————Serving Gifts ————					

### Small Group Discussion Questions

1. What did the inventory show as your gift(s)? Did you score higher in speaking or serving gifts?
2. Do you agree with the inventory results? Do the others in your group agree?
3. What commitment will you make to the Lord to develop your gift(s)? Be specific concerning where and how you think it can be used. Be sure to share this with your small group.

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Spiritual Gifts Inventory Group Record

**Directions:** After completing the Spiritual Gifts Inventory and the Spiritual Gifts Inventory Worksheet, please print your name and record your personal gift ratings for each gift below. Then circle those ratings of the gifts which you think may be your own spiritual gifts.

	Teaching	Evang.	Pastor-Teacher	Exhort.	Admin.	Faith	Giving	Service	Mercy
Example: Rick Griffith	1	6	2	3	2	8	4	5	7
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
13									
14									
15									
16									
17									
18									
19									
20									
21									
22									
23									
24									
25									
26									
27									
28									
29									
30									
<b>Total "1"s per column</b>									

### Discussion Questions:

1. What does these inventory results indicate as our church's strengths? weaknesses? Do you agree? Why or why not?
2. How is our church doing at seeing people's gifts and plugging them into ministries they enjoy? (Or are we just desperate for any unqualified volunteer?) How can we improve here?
3. Do *you* feel cared for and useful in our church body? How? If not, what can we do?

## Spiritual Gifts Inventory Explanatory Supplement

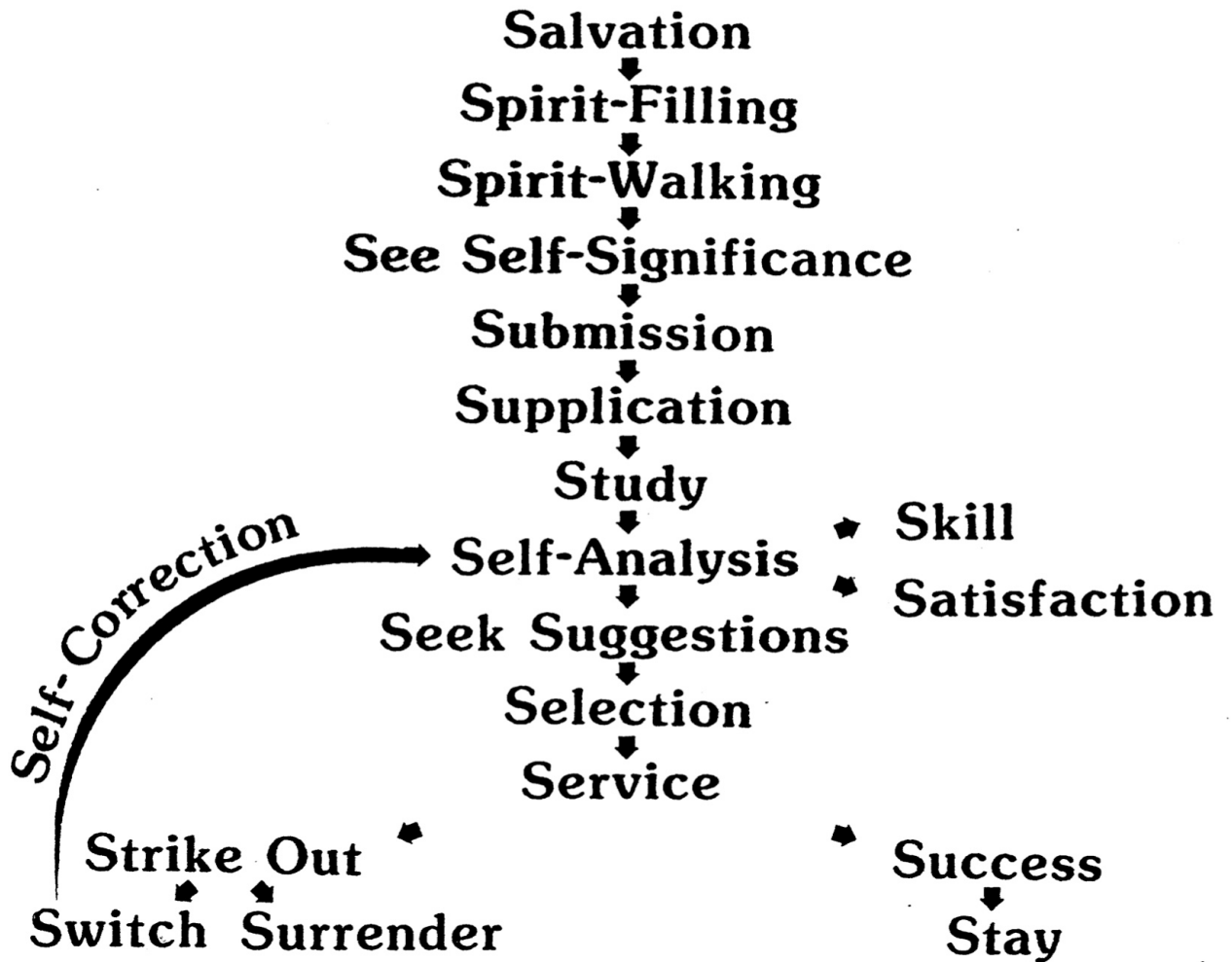
### The Purpose of the Spiritual Gifts Inventory

The Spiritual Gifts Inventory is a self-diagnostic test which, if taken honestly, will fairly accurately measure strengths and weaknesses in relation to the spiritual gifts. It is designed to help evaluate interests and preferences (questions 1-45) as well as experience and ability (questions 46-90). Each of the nine gifts receives a final score, which has helped hundreds of believers to discern areas of strength, either (1) confirming what they already knew about themselves, or (2) pointing out "hidden" areas of interest and potential which should be developed. However, there are some limitations and cautions concerning the use of this inventory that are explained below.

### The Limitations of the Spiritual Gifts Inventory

- 1) **Single Indicator:** This inventory really serves as only *one* possible indicator of what may be your spiritual gifts. Obviously, considering the opinions of others who know you well also has great value. You might want to have your spouse or close friend take the inventory, evaluating *you* by simply replacing occurrences of the word "I" with *your* name, then compare your evaluation of yourself with the other person's evaluation of you. It might surprise you!
- 2) **Easily Misinterpreted:** Scripture clearly teaches that the Holy Spirit distributes the spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 18), so this inventory does not decide which gifts apply to you. Be careful not to automatically assume that the column with the highest total score indicates your gift. However, on the other hand, it does indicate that in comparison to the other gifts your strongest areas of ability and interest seem to be associated with that particular gift.
- 3) **Pastor-Teacher Scoring:** In that this gift is the only "dual gift" (half of which is tested under the questions for the teaching gift) only the "pastor" aspect of this gift is covered in the questions associated with this gift. One should look at scores for both teaching and pastor-teacher to obtain an accurate self-appraisal of the gift of pastor-teacher.
- 4) **Subjective:** One inevitable characteristic of all self-diagnostic tests is subjectivity. Therefore, the results of the Spiritual Gifts Inventory are influenced by certain variables which may distort the "actual picture." For one thing, some people are just more critical of themselves than others (holding higher standards especially in the area of their gift!). Some tend to read too much into each question. Also, if you recently experienced success in a particular area you will tend to rate yourself higher in that area. (The opposite applies to areas of recent failure where you may score lower than the "real you.") Taking the inventory at "non-emotional" or "non-transitional" periods will produce the most accurate results. Also, taking the inventory again after a time lapse may provide further confirmation of your score.
- 5) **Trait Orientation:** The Spiritual Gifts Inventory measures only traits which, to some degree, are true of all of us. This has led some people to the idea that they must have a "portion" of all of these gifts! Nothing could be further from the truth; however, experience with the inventory has revealed that more spiritually mature Christians generally will score higher on most gifts than new believers. The reason is that they have had more experience in spiritual matters and have had a longer time to develop godly characteristics as a way of life in several areas. This is why, for comparison purposes, only the "Gift Rating Column" (not the "Total Score Column") should be used when comparing scores with others. The Spiritual Gift Inventory certainly is not the perfect diagnostic tool; however, application of good common sense and a prayerful heart will enable the inventory to help you be most effective for our Lord.

## How to Discern Your Spiritual Gifts



## Questions to Help Discern Your Gifts

The following questions contrast various gifts to enable you to determine more accurately what may be your own gift(s). This should be especially helpful if you have already narrowed them down to a few. However, contrasting two gifts doesn't necessarily imply that you can't have both, or neither! For example, if you have no strong leaning towards one answer on a question below it may be that you possess both gifts! Hopefully, by seeing the various gifts contrasted, you'll develop a better understanding of the nature of each gift.

### Teaching or Evangelism

Which brings you a greater joy: instructing Christians in the Word of God (teaching) or imparting spiritual truth to non-believers to lead them to salvation in Christ (evangelism)?

### Teaching or Exhortation\*

Do you enjoy teaching in order to participate in research (teaching) or as an opportunity to counsel others (exhortation)?

On finding solutions to human problems, do you usually begin with Scripture and relate it to human experiences (teaching) or do you usually begin with human experiences and relate them to Scripture (exhortation)?

### Evangelism or Exhortation

Which is a greater concern of yours as it relates to counseling: to counsel *the lost* in order to bring them to Christ (evangelism) or to counsel *believers* in order to stimulate them to obedience (exhortation)?

### Pastor-Teacher or Teaching

Which is a stronger motivation for you in teaching the Scriptures: the privilege of being involved in accurately presenting truth (teaching) or the privilege of being used in "nourishing other's needs" through God's Word (pastor-teacher)?

### Pastor-Teacher or Exhortation

Do you find it fairly easy to encourage those who seem to be making slow progress in their spiritual growth (pastor-teacher) or do you find this difficult and discouraging (exhortation)?

### Exhortation or Administration\*

When conflicts arise among two Christians for whom you are responsible, are you more inclined to change one's responsibilities to solve the problem (administration) or would you focus on changing the believer's attitude (exhortation)?

### Administration or Showing Mercy\*

Do you desire harmony in a group in order that it may run smoothly (administration) or because of the joy and fellowship which results in a oneness of spirit (showing mercy)?

Do you receive greater joy in being able to openly and freely discuss a problem (showing mercy) or in designing steps to solve the problem (administration)?

### Administration or Service

When facing tasks are you more inclined to do the whole job yourself (service) or to enlist others to help you (administration)? Isa. delegation difficult (service) or easy (administration) for you?

### Faith or Administration

In being involved in a great project for God, which would you enjoy more: providing the initial and sustained vision to see it completed (faith) or providing the leadership to coordinate the resources necessary to complete the task (administration)?



**Giving or Service**

What type of involvement appeals to you more in being used to see a project completed for the Lord: contributing of your material means for the project (giving) or contributing of your time and abilities to see the project accomplished (service)?

**Service or Exhortation\***

Do you enjoy counseling individuals in order to give them steps of action (exhortation) or in order to discern what their practical needs are so that you can meet their needs (service)?

**Service or Showing Mercy\***

Are you more comfortable in helping to meet the practical needs of others (service) or in meeting their mental and emotional needs (showing mercy)?

**Showing Mercy or Teaching\***

Are you motivated to do research in order to establish correct doctrine (teaching) or in order to understand doctrinal differences among Christians and how to bring harmony and oneness (showing mercy)?

Are you more concerned with the Scriptural pattern of a worship service (teaching) or with the atmosphere of a worship service (showing mercy)?

**Showing Mercy or Exhortation\***

Which emphasis is more important to you: spiritual healing or spiritual growth?

If the answer is spiritual healing: Are you interested in healing for the sake of preventing unnecessary suffering (showing mercy) or for the purpose of challenging one on to spiritual maturity through healing (exhortation).

If the answer is spiritual growth: Are you interested in spiritual growth primarily that by growing spiritually one may eliminate suffering and disharmony caused by wrong responses (showing mercy) or primarily for the sake of that person's spiritual maturity (exhortation)?

Which is more important: that you are able to sense a genuine concern and interest in a person helping you (showing mercy) or that the person can give you steps of action in solving a problem (exhortation)?

When ministering to another's needs, do you generally encourage him/her regarding hurts from something which already occurred in the past (showing mercy) or do you encourage him/her in areas of growth looking primarily to the future (exhortation)?

\* Adapted from the Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts by Bill Gothard, "Understanding Your Spiritual Gifts," 6-8.

## **Ministry Opportunities at Our Church**

Scripture teaches that God has gifted each member of this church body with a spiritual gift "for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:7). This, of course, implies that each of us would benefit the church most when we function primarily in a ministry which employs these strong traits. Isn't this true for you? Why not consider some of the current needs in these areas right now?

**Concerning this gift ...      our church has these needs...      so talk to ...      at ...**

**Teaching**

**Evangelism**

**Pastor-Teacher**

**Exhortation**

**Administration**

**Faith**

**Giving**

**Service**

**Showing Mercy**

## How to Make Your Spiritual Gift Really Count

1 Corinthians 13:1-7

**Truth:** The way to make your spiritual gift really count is to use it in selfless love for others.

### Introduction

Issue: How can you make your spiritual gift really count?

The real issue is not what gift you have, but how you use it for the sake of Christ.

The Corinthian believers were very gifted, but were really messing up in how they used their gifts.

- a. Some used their gifts with a spirit of inferiority (12:14-20).
- b. Some used their gifts with a spirit of superiority (12:21).
- c. Both attitudes were wrong since we all need one another (12:22, 27).

The even “better way” to use their gifts (12:31b) introduces chapter 13.

### I. Any gift used to its maximum helps no one if not exercised in love (13:1-3).

- A. Speaking every earthly and heavenly language without love helps no one (12:1).
- B. Using very important gifts without love helps no one (12:2).
- C. Using a serving gift, such as giving without love, helps no one (12:3).

### II. Loving use of the gifts is seen when they are used to benefit others (13:4-7). If you use your gifts in love then people will be helped.

- A. Using gifts in love means serving others with characteristics which unite the body (13:4a).
  1. Serving others in love means doing it with patience.
  2. Serving others in love means doing it with kindness.
- B. Using gifts in love means serving without seven divisive actions (13:4b-5).
- C. Using gifts in love means we get excited about the right things in our church (13:6).
- D. Using gifts in love means not becoming easily discouraged from helping others (13:7).

### Application

The issue of motivation (A. W. Tozer):

“Ask not *what* a man does to determine whether his work is sacred or secular.

Ask *why* he does it. The motive is everything.

Let a man sanctify the Lord God in his heart, and he can thereafter do no secular act.”

The best way to make your spiritual gift really count is to use it in love, which means to use your abilities for the sake of others.

The best way I can make *my* spiritual gift count for eternity is by...

## Guidelines for Using Your Spiritual Gift

*A sermon on 1 Timothy 4:11-16 by Chuck Swindoll*

### I. Introduction

### II. Attitudes and Guidelines

#### A. Four "Adolescent" Attitudes that Accompany the Teaching of Spiritual Gifts:

1. I am waiting for the sudden inspiration of God ("the right feeling") and then I will exercise my gift.  
1 Cor. 12:4-7
2. My gift is the most (or least) important of all.
3. I refuse all other involvements except those related to my area of giftedness.  
2 Tim. 4:5  
Titus 1:5  
Titus 1:10, 13
4. I quit either because I am in conflict with someone or I am not appreciated.  
2 Tim. 4:7, 14-17  
1 Tim. 4:14

"Spiritual gifts are wanting only because they're being neglected, not because they're not available! There's plenty of manpower, plenty of ability..."

#### B. Guidelines in Five Words How to Stop Neglecting Your Gift (1 Tim. 4):

1. Information (v. 11)
  - a. Believe that you have a spiritual gift.
  - b. Make a spiritual gifts notebook
  - c. Teach others about spiritual gifts.
  - d. Pray that God will give you clear direction in the area of your spiritual gift.
2. Toleration (v. 12)
3. Attention (v. 13)
4. Confirmation (v. 15)  
Prov 27:19  
Prov 27:17
5. Evaluation (v. 16)

### III. Conclusion: Stay alert, be available, don't wait, give it a try, start today.

### IV. Personal Application Questions

- A. What do you foresee as the greatest hindrance from you exercising your gift? (i.e., If *one thing* would prevent you from using your gift, what would that be? Pride? Inadequacy? Lack of training? Fear? etc.)
- B. What new area of ministry should you begin in response to what you now know about your spiritual gift(s)?

**Readings on Spiritual Gifts**

Thomas R. Edgar, "The Cessation of the Sign Gifts" *BSac* 145:580 (Oct 1988):371 at [https://www.the-highway.com/cessation\\_Edgar.html](https://www.the-highway.com/cessation_Edgar.html)

Referring to the charismatic movement, Hollenweger states that "in the not too distant future there will be more Christians belonging to this type of Christianity than to the Anglican community. They will number almost as many as all other Protestants together." He feels that the numerical and perhaps the spiritual center of Christianity will shift to "Indigenous Non-white" or "Third World Pentecostal" churches. The validity of such a prevalent force is an issue that cannot be ignored.

**The Essential Question: From God or Not from God?**

As with any other doctrinal issue it is important to know the truth or the error of the "charismatic" position. This is not a purely doctrinal matter, since in the charismatic movement in all its various forms, such as Pentecostalism, neo-Pentecostalism, "power evangelism," and the "signs and wonders" movement, emphasis is placed on phenomena and subjective experiences. These experiences, which transcend doctrinal considerations and doctrinal boundaries, are the *raison d'être* of the movement. They are not merely the daily outworking of one's doctrine as distinct from his doctrinal position, but are usually crisis events that allegedly go beyond normal, traditional Christian experience. These so-called "spiritual" experiences are either from God or not from God. There can be no neutral or partially true position. Either they are biblically true or they are false experiences. If they are biblically false then the issue is much more serious than merely another view of the Christian life, since the charismatic movement involves a spiritual experience that attempts to be in direct contact with supernatural forces. Whether the charismatics are correct can only be determined from the Scriptures and other relevant facts. By the very nature of the issue, the "gifts," such as tongues, healings, and signs and wonders, so prevalent in today's charismatic movement, are either from God or not from God. There can be no middle ground.

**Evidence Contrary to the Validity of the Phenomena**

Several factors give evidence that the phenomena of the charismatic movement are not the gifts and activities of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. On the other hand charismatic proponents have given no evidence, other than their assumption, that these are the same phenomena. That their numbers are growing, that the followers are enthusiastic, and that there are alleged miracles are not evidence that the phenomena are from the Holy Spirit, since all these occur in other religions. To argue that the New Testament gifts could occur today or that no verse rules out such a possibility is not enough; it must also be shown that the modern charismatic "gifts" are the same as in the New Testament. The proponents of the charismatic movement have been unsuccessful in proving either the first (the possibility of the gifts today) or the second (that these are the same phenomena). Are all phenomena automatically from the Holy Spirit simply because someone makes such an assertion, unless a verse can be found that directly states they are not? It is not enough merely to assert that charismatic phenomena are New Testament phenomena. There must be evidence that they are the same.

**The Evidence Of History**

If the miraculous gifts of the New Testament age had continued in the church, one would expect an unbroken line of occurrences from apostolic times to the present. If they are of God, why should such miracles be absent for centuries?

The entire controversy exists because the miraculous gifts of the New Testament age did cease and did not occur for almost 1,900 years of church history and certainly have not continued in an unbroken line. Questions about their presence today as well as differing opinions, even among charismatics, regarding the nature of tongues, prophecy, and certain other gifts are due to the fact that they ceased. Chrysostom, a fourth-century theologian, testified that they had ceased so long before his time that no one was certain of their characteristics.

History contradicts the charismatics. Though some have attempted to prove that tongues and other miraculous gifts have occurred in the postapostolic history of the church, the very paucity and sporadic nature of alleged occurrences is evidence against this claim. Referring to alleged instances of tongues-speaking, Hinson, a church historian, sums up the situation this way: "The first sixteen centuries of its history were lean ones indeed. . . . if the first five centuries were lean the next were starvation years for the practice in Western Christendom and doubtful ones in Eastern Christendom."

After a few alleged instances in the second century there is a gap of almost 1,000 years before a few more occur. Obviously it would not have been difficult to produce evidence for these gifts during the apostolic age. Why then is there such a dearth of evidence if the gifts continued throughout church history? The alleged instances are even more rare if restricted to genuine believers, and if hearsay evidence is omitted. If instances of the gift of healing rather than supposed answers to prayer are considered, the alleged instances all but vanish. That these miraculous workings ceased in the past can hardly be refuted, and this is recognized by many charismatics. Dayton feels that many charismatics actually prefer to grant that certain gifts ceased, since they regard today's phenomena as a latter-day pouring out of the Spirit.

Explanations are unrealistic. It is one thing for a doctrine such as justification by faith to be temporarily lost due to man's frailty. It is another thing entirely for miraculous signs and wonders to be missing. Those at Pentecost were not expecting to speak as they did.

In Acts no tongues speaker was previously aware of the existence of the gift; yet they spoke. They could hardly have had faith in their ability to perform miracles or to speak in tongues, since they were unaware of such gifts. They did not obtain or lose the ability because of their belief or lack of belief in the charismata. If God gave these gifts during the history of the church, they would have occurred regardless of man's frailty. To argue that the gifts faded away in the postapostolic church because of a failure to believe in miracles evades the facts of history and has no biblical support.

First Corinthians 12-14 implies that the early church was only too inclined toward such gifts rather than against them. In almost every religion men have been inclined toward the miraculous rather than toward rejecting obvious miracles. And yet some argue that miracles ceased or nearly so in the early church—an era when belief in the supernatural was rampant and when the signs and wonders actually occurred—because of disbelief in miracles! Yet it is claimed that in the most rationalistic of ages, when no miracles were occurring, 19- and 20th-century Christians believed to the extent that the gifts reoccurred, and reoccurred on the scale of today's claims. Since modern Christians are so receptive to signs and wonders and modern man is so willing to believe the charismatic claims, on what basis can one assume that the early Christians would refuse to do so? Those willing to believe religious miracles are always plentiful. To claim that this "miraculous infusion" of the Spirit gives joy, purpose, power for service, and revitalization of the church, and at the same time claim that such a tremendous working was ignored, rejected, and allowed to drop out of the early church which experienced it, is illogical. The only reasonable explanation for the lack of these gifts in church history is that God did not give them. If He had given them, they would have occurred.

Since these gifts and signs did cease, the burden of proof is entirely on the charismatics to prove their validity. Too long Christians have assumed that the noncharismatic must produce incontestable biblical evidence that the miraculous sign gifts did cease. However, noncharismatics have no burden to prove this, since it has already been proved by history. It is an irrefutable fact admitted by many Pentecostals. Therefore the charismatics must prove biblically that the sign gifts will start up again during the Church Age and that today's phenomena are this reoccurrence. In other words they must prove that their experiences are the reoccurrence of gifts that have not occurred for almost 1,900 years.

### **"Latter day" Explanations are Inadequate.**

Many Pentecostals hold that the sign gifts did cease and that they have reoccurred in these "latter days." This must be demonstrated from Scripture, however. There is no biblical evidence that there will be a reoccurrence in the church of the sign gifts or that believers will work miracles near the end of the Church Age. However, there is ample evidence that near the end of the age there will be false

prophets who perform miracles, prophesy, and cast out demons in Jesus' name (cf. Matt. 7:22-23; 24:11, 24; 2 Thess. 2:9-12). During the Church Age there will be false leaders who fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness (2 Cor. 11:13-15). During the Tribulation period, there is no indication that believers, other than the two witnesses of Revelation 11:3-12, will perform miracles. Those performed by the two witnesses are exceptional, and their actions are comparable to those of Old Testament prophets rather than to those of the apostles. The two witnesses are not part of the church, and if they were, they could hardly be considered typical of the church.

The "latter rain" arguments are incorrectly based on verses that actually are referring to seasonal rainfall in Israel. Hosea 6:3 and Joel 2:23, for example, refer not to some unusual outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the last days of the Church Age. They refer instead to spring rains, in contrast to early rains in the fall.

The arguments based on the expression "in the last days" in Acts 2:16-21 are also invalid. If the "last days" referred to in Acts 2:17 includes the day of Pentecost, the beginning of the Church Age, and "if this is that" (v. 16) includes Pentecost, then it cannot mean at the same time the "last days" of this Church Age. On the other hand if the "last days" do not include Pentecost, then Pentecost was not a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, and Acts 2:16-21 refers specifically to Israel and is still future. Either way this passage gives no evidence for a reoccurrence of miraculous gifts during the "last (latter) days" of the church. The present charismatic movement is characterized by phenomena that began in the church about 100 years ago, which apart from any historical connection or evidence are claimed to be the same as the miracles performed in the apostolic age. It is simply naive to accept this claim without some direct historical link or solid biblical evidence that these present phenomena are the same as those in the days of the apostles. The most reliable evidence would be a direct historical link with the apostolic gifts due to their continuity in the church. However, as already argued, history testifies to the contrary. The gifts ceased and there is no reason to expect their presence or reoccurrence today.

### **Lack Of Similarity With The New Testament**

For any phenomena to make credible claim to be the same as the gifts and miracles of the apostolic age there must be great similarity between the two. Any phenomena can be intentionally duplicated or copied. Therefore similarity alone cannot prove the modern phenomena are genuine. Conversely a lack of similarity is definitely evidence against the claim that they are the same as the New Testament gifts and miracles.

An examination of the New Testament reveals that the modern charismatic phenomena are not sufficiently similar to those of the apostolic age. Where are the tongues of fire and the rushing of a mighty wind as on the day of Pentecost? Do missionaries blind their opponents as Paul did? Do church leaders discern hypocrisy and pronounce the immediate death of members as in Acts 5:1-11? Do evangelists amaze an entire city with miracles as did Philip (8:5-8)? Are they then taken to another place of ministry by the Holy Spirit (vv. 39-40)? Are entire multitudes healed by merely being in the shadow of the healer (5:15)? Do prophets give specific prophecies which come to pass soon after (11:27-28)?

The miracles and signs of the apostolic age were clearly and overtly miraculous. Even the opponents of the gospel could not refute the miracles of the apostolic age. But today's "signs and wonders" cannot be verified even by those who are neutral or friendly to the movement. A detailed comparison with specific individual gifts shows an amazing lack of similarity between the New Testament gifts and the modern "charismatic" gifts.

**The gift of healing.** The New Testament gift of healing is a specific gift to an individual enabling him to heal. It is not to be confused with healing performed by God in answer to prayer. New Testament healings include those with verifiable afflictions and handicaps such as the man who was crippled from birth (Acts 3:1-10). The healings were instantaneous, complete, and obvious to all. The man crippled from birth had never walked, but he was instantly able to walk and jump. The healings in the apostolic age never failed regardless of the faith of the recipient. They did not depend on direct physical contact (5:15). There were no preliminaries, healing meetings, or incantations. The healer

merely stated to the individual, even when the individual was unaware of the intention to heal (3:1-10), something equivalent to the words, "In Jesus' name, stand up and walk." The healings were usually in public, performed on unbelievers, and often en masse.

The modern charismatic movement made little impact on the basis of speaking in tongues alone. It was not until "healing" was added that the movement began to grow in significant numbers.

Today's healers admittedly often fail. This is blamed on the lack of faith of the sick rather than on the healer. The alleged healings are seldom instantaneous or complete. They usually are not healings of objectively verifiable illnesses; they often pertain to internal disorders such as "emotional healing." Rather than being irrefutable, they are unverified or even denied by those neutral. They involve healing meetings, preliminaries, incantations, and usually repeated visits. They are not performed in the streets, en masse, or at a distance. In a crowd they are usually performed on only a select few. They are never performed on those who are not aware of the "healer" or his intention to "heal."

There is little correspondence between modern-day charismatic "healings" and the healings recorded in the New Testament. The differences are so vast that many of today's healers are careful to point out that they do not have the gift of healing, but are merely those to whom God often responds with healing. No one heals today in such a way that it is clearly the New Testament gift of healing.

**Exorcism of demons.** The miraculous ability to exorcise demons directly also needs to be differentiated from answers to prayer (James 5:14). The exorcisms in Acts concerned those clearly recognized as "possessed," including a girl with a mantic gift (Acts 16:16-18). They were clearly differentiated from those who were merely ill (5:16). They were not nebulous cases of emotional problems such as "personality meltdown," frustration, tension, the "demon of worry," the "demon of drugs or alcoholism," as is often the case in alleged exorcisms today. Such can hardly be considered demonism in the New Testament sense.

The New Testament instances of exorcism never failed, were without preliminaries, were instantaneous, were usually performed in public, often en masse, usually on unbelievers, and in the case of the mantic girl (Acts 16:16-18) apart from any cooperation of the demonized. Today's "exorcisms" often fail, often require repeated sessions, are usually unverified as demonism, are never en masse, seldom if ever occur in public, and are only on the cooperative "faithful." Many cases are similar to common psychiatric or religious counseling sessions that are claimed to be "demon exorcism." This is not to suggest that genuine cases of demon possession may not exist. The point is that merely claiming to exorcise demons gives no evidence that one is actually doing so.

**Raising the dead.** Dorcas had been dead for some time when Peter apart from fanfare instantaneously raised her (Acts 9:40). The incident regarding Eutychus (20:7-12) concerns a boy who fell three stories and was dead. Paul with no fanfare pronounced him alive. In the apostolic age with all the miracles, exorcisms, healings en masse, and so on, there are only these two low-profile incidents of raising the dead. This action was apparently rare even for the apostles. There is no reason to expect this today. No modern-day "raising of the dead" has been verified. Wimber refers to a man who fell, hit his head, was apparently unconscious for three minutes, and "came to" with a bump on his head. After Wimber and others prayed the bump eventually went away. This is incredible, not as a miracle, but that anyone would consider this as a possible raising of the dead. Would anyone have been convinced by such a "miracle" that Jesus was the Son of God or that the apostles represented God?

**The gift of tongues.** The nature, purpose, and other characteristics of the gift of tongues, including a complete exegetical discussion and refutation of the concept of private or devotional tongues is included elsewhere. The tongues of the apostolic age were genuine miracles, since they were the ability to speak previously unlearned foreign languages, rather than the "charismatic tongues" of today, which can easily be duplicated. The only passage describing the nature of tongues speaking is Acts 2:4-11, where they are definitely languages. Peter stated that the tongues-speaking in Cornelius's house (10:46) was the same as on the day of Pentecost (11:17). And there is no reason to assume the instance in Acts 19:6 was different. Since 1 Corinthians 14 repeatedly states that the tongues-speaking in Corinth was in an assembly of believers, why then was it mysterious and why was there lack of understanding? It was because the believers did not understand the foreign languages of the tongues-



speakers. The mystery was not because the tongues in 1 Corinthians differed in nature from the tongues in Acts.

New Testament tongues were verifiable foreign languages. The term *glossa* means "language" and is never used for ecstatic speech. By contrast, today's "tongues" have never been verified as actual languages. All objective studies by impartial linguists indicate that they do not have the characteristics common to languages.

The New Testament gift of tongues is specifically said to be a sign for unbelievers (1 Cor. 14:22). This is how it functioned at Pentecost. All instances were public, not private. The people who spoke in tongues in Acts (2:4; 10:46; 19:6) were not previously aware that the ability or gift existed, and in Acts 10:46 and 19:6 the people were not previously aware of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They could not have been seeking or in any way exercising belief in such a gift, and yet they received it. There is no indication that the New Testament speakers spoke in a trance; they were in control of the phenomenon. Perhaps the most outstanding contrast is usage. The gift of tongues in the New Testament functioned, as did all the other gifts, for ministry to others (1 Cor. 12:1-30; 1 Pet. 4:10), rather than primarily for the benefit of the speaker as in the modern charismatic movement.

There is no similarity between today's tongues and the New Testament gift. Today's charismatic proponents are wrong regarding the nature, purpose, use, and every other aspect of tongues. There is no reason to assume merely on the basis of their claim that they are correct in identifying their tongues-speaking—which can easily be duplicated and is common to man—as the New Testament gift of tongues.

**Conclusion.** The "charismatic gifts" of today are not similar to the New Testament phenomena either in general perspective or in the details. There is no evidence to conclude that they are the same; there is every reason to conclude that they are not. The historical fact that the New Testament gifts ceased long ago and the fact that there is no historical link whatever between the charismatic phenomena and the New Testament gifts require the same conclusion. The only remaining possibility for giving credence to the modern charismatic claims would be to produce direct statements of Scripture that the apostolic phenomena will always be present in the church, or that they will specifically be in the modern church despite their cessation through most of church history. Even if this were produced, there must also be evidence that the charismatic phenomena are somehow the same phenomena referred to in the passages. However, there is no specific biblical evidence such as this. There is no biblical statement that requires a denial of historical fact or that requires an equation of such dissimilar entities merely on the assertion of the proponents. All objective evidence is contrary to the charismatic claims. It is not sufficient to assert that by faith their claims must be taken contrary to the evidence. This is existential naiveté, not faith. Faith is trust in biblical evidence rather than in experience.

### **Biblical Evidence For Cessation**

No Bible verse specifically states that tongues, signs, and wonders will continue throughout the Church Age. Nor is there a verse that specifically states they will cease at the end of the apostolic age. However, this does not mean that one cannot take a position on this issue. Many doctrines, such as the Trinity, are not directly stated but are derived from the study and correlation of passages of Scripture. There are several indications in the Scriptures that the gifts of tongues, healing, and miracles (signs and wonders) will not continue. The charismatic movement in all its forms rests not on exegetical evidence that the gifts will continue, but on the assumption contrary to history that since they occurred in the apostolic age they should also occur today. The foundation for this assumption is nonexistent.

The New Testament church was not characterized by power and miracles as the charismatics assume. It was characterized by the problems addressed in the epistles (including, e.g., the problems that beset the Corinthian church) and the problems of the churches described in Revelation 2 and 3. Miracles were performed with very few exceptions only by the apostles (Acts 2:43; 5:12). Those who "turned the world upside down" were the apostles, not the churches as a whole. The charismatics assume that

the church today should be like their imaginary church. They assume that the entire church today should be able to do all the apostles did in the New Testament.

If the church as a whole had performed miracles, it is only an assumption, apart from evidence, that this should be true today. This assumption is not interpretation. The assumption that the miraculous events recorded in the Book of Acts should occur today is "a distinct hermeneutic, a distinctively Pentecostal manner of appropriating the Scriptures." This development of theology on the basis of narrative rather than on direct teaching of Scripture is always a precarious methodology.

**General biblical evidence.** Moses performed a series of miracles. However, they did not continue throughout the Old Testament nor were other believers expected to do the same. The Old Testament prophets occasionally performed miracles, but Israel in general was not expected to do so, nor did the miracles continue throughout Israel's history. The fact that some individuals on special occasions in biblical history performed miracles did not result in others doing the same or in a continuity of those miracles. So there is no reason to assume that since the apostles and a few members of the early church performed miracles, they are to be expected today.

**Specific biblical evidence.** In addition to evidence from history there is also specific biblical evidence that certain gifts were temporary. The term "apostle," commonly used in ancient times in the sense of "representative," in a few passages describes representatives of a local church. This is not the New Testament gift of apostleship. Nor can this term, contrary to its normal meaning and contrary to the New Testament descriptions, be equated with the modern missionary merely on the basis of etymology. The only individuals in the New Testament who clearly possessed the miraculous gift of apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ and could perform miracles as required of an apostle (2 Cor. 12:12) were the Twelve and Paul. Perhaps Barnabas and James can be included. Almost every branch of the church, including most Pentecostals, has held that apostles in this sense have not continued in the church. The charismatic reliance on the narrative of Acts is often avoided when defining "apostles" or "prophets," as too restrictive. These gifts can be precisely delineated, however. Imprecise use of Scripture is a common failing among charismatics. No matter how one tries to broaden the term "apostle," there is little doubt that apostles such as the Twelve and Paul did not continue. If they did not, then all things are not as they were in the New Testament church, all miraculous gifts did not continue as in the beginning church, and at least one gift in the New Testament did not continue.

In addition the New Testament sets standards for an apostle that preclude the continuance of this gift. Not only must an apostle be able to perform miracles (2 Cor. 12:12), not only was the early church very careful about granting anyone, even Paul, the title of "apostle" (Gal. 2:1-10), but also an apostle must have seen the resurrected Lord (1 Cor. 9:1-2; Acts 1:22-26). Paul explicitly stated that he was the last one to see the resurrected Lord (1 Cor. 15:8), and he specifically connected this fact with his apostleship. This requirement for apostleship refers to genuine appearances of the resurrected Christ and not to "visions." There have been no resurrection appearances since the apostolic age. Paul clearly stated that the last appearance was to him. (Revelation 1:12-18 refers to a vision, and is not an appearance of the resurrected Lord in bodily form on earth.) Therefore apostles in the sense of the Twelve and Paul cannot occur today.

When Paul wrote that all gifts were given to the church (1 Cor. 1:7) and benefited the church, he did not mean that all believers were apostles or performed miracles, but that the apostolic, miraculous ministry was experienced by and benefited the Corinthian church. Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:20 that the apostles and prophets are the foundation for the universal church. This at least implies that they were only for the beginning, and this accords with the other specifics mentioned above. Since "apostle" in the full sense of the gift was only a temporary gift and did not continue in the church, the biblical precedent is established that some gifts given in the apostolic age did not continue and were only temporary. It is contrary to Scripture to assume that all gifts and all happenings of the apostolic church are to continue and to be expected in today's church.

Since the ones who performed the miracles were only in the beginning church, it is logical that the miracles themselves were only for the apostolic age. Since the ability to perform such miracles was evidence of apostleship (2 Cor. 12:12), then with rare exceptions others could not have performed

such signs and wonders, and they would not continue when the apostles ceased. In addition to this implication the temporary nature of miracles is directly supported by Scripture. Mark wrote that the apostles went forth in accord with the Lord's instructions and preached (aorist tense) everywhere and the Lord confirmed their word with signs. This is all placed in the past at the time of Mark's writing (Mark 16:20; the time of the present participle is relative to the past tense of the main verb). The same is true in Hebrews 2:3-4, which says miracles were performed by eyewitnesses of the Lord (apostles), and were performed by God to confirm the word of the eyewitnesses. All this was past at the time Hebrews was written (the main verb is past tense and the participle is relative in time to the main verb "was confirmed"). In both cases the signs, wonders, and miracles are referred to as being in the past at the time of writing; they were not referred to as occurring at that time. In both passages miracles were performed by the apostles (eyewitnesses) and are described as intended by God as evidence to authenticate the apostles' preaching.

James 5:14 does not instruct the sick to look for a healer or for someone with the ability to heal. Rather it instructs the sick to call for the elders and they are to pray for him. This is basically in accord with the procedure in noncharismatic churches, but is in direct contrast to what would be expected if the gift of healing were available for believers. Either the gift was not to be used to heal believers, or the only other option is that it had ceased.

**Conclusion.** There is ample biblical evidence that the miraculous gifts ceased with the apostolic age. To assume that such gifts are permanent is contrary to the Scriptures in general and to the biblical precedent that some gifts such as full apostles of the Lord definitely ceased. History is against the charismatic claims. The dissimilarity between the New Testament gifts and the alleged gifts of the charismatics also contradicts their claims. The assumption that because these gifts existed in the apostolic age they should also exist today is a gratuitous assumption contrary to objective evidence. It is also an assumption contrary to scriptural principles and specific biblical evidence. There is no teaching in Scripture that the church should look for such miraculous gifts, nor are they referred to in the passages discussing the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10-18), the life of faith (Eph. 5:18; Col. 3:12-17), and requirements for church leaders (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9) as necessary for the believer to lead a spiritual life.

### Characteristics That Refute Charismatic Claims

Various present-day forms of the charismatic movement are offshoots of Pentecostalism. All have the same basic ideology and all have arisen because of the modern Pentecostal movement. The primary focus for the individual, no matter how their theologians may describe it, is experiential. Many people in the charismatic movement emphasize the miraculous nature of this experience seemingly for personal benefit more than service to others.

### Theological Associations

In Pentecostalism the doctrine of Christian perfectionism assumed a specific form in the inaccurate concept of a postconversion crisis experience, a "second blessing." This teaching with its concept of an effusion of power from the Holy Spirit resulted in the expectancy of and search to obtain overt "power" as described in Acts.

The movement crosses all theological boundaries. Speaking in tongues is present in non-Christian religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism, and in cults such as Mormonism. Healing, miracles, and exorcisms are also common in non-Christian religions. In conventional Christian circles the charismatic movement includes Protestants and Roman Catholics, liberals and conservatives, and individuals in many denominations. Those who believe in the inspiration of the Bible, justification by faith, and many other doctrines—as well as those who do not—are also involved.

### Questionable Theology

The concept of the "second blessing" or "baptism or fullness of the Spirit" presupposes that while Jesus' death on the cross paid for sin, it is insufficient to empower for service, to enable one to be spiritual, or to give effectiveness in prayer. This differs drastically from the teaching of the New

Testament. The view that only those who speak in tongues have real communication with God is contrary to the biblical teaching that all believers have full access to God. Romans 8:26 states that all believers are helped in prayer by the Spirit with inaudible, non-uttered, internal groanings.

The tongues movement presupposes that communication with the spiritual realm is more direct when it is apart from the mind. Such a concept, though found in various religions, is contrary to biblical Christianity. This emphasis on a level of communication that bypasses the mind and is not direct communication from the believer to God is a dangerous teaching. This interest in "supernatural" events, not primarily as convincing signs but as the daily experience of believers that supposedly places them in contact with the supernatural, is dangerous. This middle-level, spirit realm, called the "excluded middle," is an area of charismatic emphasis.

The emphasis on experience, particularly in this level above the rational, often results in emphasizing "experience" over Scripture. In a recent nationally televised program on the subject of televangelism several charismatically oriented evangelists appealed to the "call" as the license for a sinning preacher to continue his ministry. They made no appeal to the Scriptures.

### **Similarities To Non-Christian Religions**

The modern-day charismatic movement is disturbingly similar to practices common in paganism, while at the same time it lacks correspondence to biblical miracles. Trancelike states and communications on a level apart from the mind are common in paganism. An emphasis on physical healing and exorcism for the benefit of adherents is common. The experience of a power or force "overcoming" the participants is similar to pagan practice. The bizarre and often wild practices of early Pentecostalism seem similar to pagan religion.

The idea of contact and interest in the spirit world, the "excluded middle" between God and man, is also common to pagan religions.

### **The Effects Of The Movement**

All groups and doctrinal persuasions of Christendom have experienced theological and moral problems with both their leaders and laymen. As other Christians have experienced, so a number of charismatic leaders have led lives that are morally or ethically contrary to Scripture. If not more common, this is at least as common as among noncharismatics. Therefore it may be safely concluded that all the alleged miracles and so-called tongues-speaking have not produced any genuine spiritual advance over noncharismatics. It has produced enthusiasm for the miraculous, but this is not to be equated with spirituality.

All these supposedly miraculous events have produced no advance in biblical knowledge or spiritual living. The basic doctrines common to the movement are not original with charismatics. Their main claim to biblical knowledge is the assumption that the current church should be like the early church. Since the movement has not produced more spiritual believers or any advance in biblical or theological knowledge, what has it accomplished? Is it not amazing that a movement that claims to have restored power for service, ability to communicate with God more than others have, ability for self-edification, power to heal and perform other miracles, and ability to prophesy and receive direct revelation, has produced no significant advance in spirituality or in biblical or theological knowledge? Is it not inconsistent that a movement which claims to be in direct contact with the Holy Spirit, to have all gifts such as prophecy, apostleship, and the word of knowledge, to communicate directly with God by tongues-speaking and other means, can at the same time include Roman Catholics, conservative and liberal Protestants, amillennialists, premillennialists, Calvinists, Arminians, those who deny the verbal inspiration of the Bible, and those who reject Christ's vicarious atonement on the cross?

Apparently the Holy Spirit is not concerned with communicating any information to correct all these differences, many of which are crucial and some of which are incorrect. All this direct communication with the Spirit has apparently done nothing to correct even basic errors. It has not even produced unity among charismatics regarding the nature and purpose of many of the gifts. This

movement has solved no theological issue, produced no advance in biblical knowledge, and has not produced more spiritual Christians. Would such an effusion of the genuine Spirit of God produce so little? Other than enthusiasm there seems to be no spiritual advantage to this movement and the noncharismatics are not missing out on any genuine spiritual benefit. On the negative side the movement has split churches, and through its televangelists the movement has had one of the most significant negative impacts on the testimony of the church in recent history. These characteristics are evidence that the charismatic phenomena are not the New Testament phenomena, that the genuine gifts are not present.

### **Conclusion**

In every attempt to prove that the New Testament gifts exist today, the charismatic movement fails. The objective evidence of history and lack of correspondence with the New Testament indicate that the genuine miraculous gifts ceased and have not reoccurred. Biblical evidence indicates that these gifts ceased with the apostolic age. The theological associations and results of today's so-called miraculous gifts are contrary to gifts given by God. The movement has not produced Christians who are more spiritually mature, as would be expected of a genuine occurrence of the New Testament gifts. Apparently a Christian experiences no spiritual loss by not becoming involved in the charismatic movement.

On the other hand there is a dangerous similarity to non-Christian practices, there is a dangerous interest in supernatural phenomena that give no evidence of being from God, and there is a disturbing interest in the spiritual world somewhere between God and man. Since evidence points to the cessation of the miraculous gifts in the apostolic age, no one can be confident that the charismatic phenomena are from God. Since believers are warned to avoid contact with the intermediate spiritual world and since they should do only what they are confident God approves, no one should experiment in the realm of the charismatic phenomena.

---

### **Author**

Thomas R. Edgar Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis Capital Bible Seminary, Lanham, Maryland.

# F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (1 of 14)

Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 63

the work of Wayne A. Grudem, who is active in a Vineyard-affiliated church and is an associate professor of biblical and systematic theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois.<sup>1</sup> Grudem's arguments have become a primary justification for this form of "prophecy" not only in Vineyard fellowships but also among such groups as the Signs and Wonders movement and the Kansas City Fellowship of prophets.<sup>2</sup> Accolades for his view are coming from within and without the charismatic and Pentecostal movements, while some express hope that this work could be used as a means of fostering dialogue between cessationists and noncessationists.<sup>3</sup>

Since Grudem's work has become a mainstay of defense among charismatic groups and since calls for dialogue and unity between cessationists and noncessationists are being voiced based on his writings, his central thesis and major supporting arguments must be analyzed in order to determine their validity.

## I. DELINEATION OF GRUDEM'S HYPOTHESIS

Grudem offers his own definition of Christian prophecy,<sup>4</sup> one that differs from traditional understanding. He writes, "Proph-

1 Michael G. Maudlin, "Seers in the Heartland," *Christianity Today*, January 14, 1991, 20.

2 Ibid. According to Maudlin, Grudem's book has become a primary doctrinal and theological justification of the Vineyard and Signs and Wonders movements. The Kansas City Fellowship of prophets, a group closely allied with these associations, also uses his work as a defense against critics who seek to point out the prophetic excesses of the group.

3 Grudem's work, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1988), has received praise from such scholars as J. I. Packer, who describes it in the following terms: "careful, thorough, wise, and to my mind convincing." Vern Poythress, professor of New Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary, says "it is highly recommended." Stanley Horton of the Assemblies of God Seminary commends the book as "thorough, Biblical, and practical." L. Russ Bush of Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary states, "If Grudem's convincing thesis could be heard, a new path of dialog could perhaps be opened up in the Christian community." For additional quotes from various scholars, consult the back cover of Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*. The conclusions of this work are based on his doctoral dissertation, which was published with some additions in 1982 under the title *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press).

4 Absence of an explicit definition makes an analysis of Grudem's work problematic. As Robert L. Thomas notes, "One must piece together from scattered excerpts Grudem's concept of the gift." ("Prophecy Rediscovered? A Review of *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 [January-March, 1992]: 84, n. 14). In opposition to Grudem's assertions, close examination of the biblical data reveals a contrasting definition that New Testament prophecy is "speech directly inspired by the Spirit of God, and therefore fully authoritative" (Robert L. Saucy, "Prophecy Today? An Initial Response," *Sundoulos* [Spring 1990]): 5). This latter definition is adopted by the present writer as a working definition, especially since it is consistent with a careful analysis of the biblical evidence.

BIBLIOTHECA SACRA 150 (January-March 1993): 62-88

## DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACH TWO PROPHETIC GIFTS?\*

F. David Farnell

**I**n the second century, postapostolic Christianity faced a serious challenge from the prophetic crisis known as the "New Prophecy" (*νέα προφητεία*) or Montanism. This labeling of Montanism as the "New Prophecy" by its adherents shows why the early church rejected Montanism: it was "new" in that it differed markedly from the early church's understanding of the nature of New Testament prophets and prophecy. As noted, this understanding by the early church came from the standards set by the Old Testament for the evaluation of prophets. Before being checked, Montanism spread rapidly throughout the Greco-Roman world and quickly won many adherents, so that even the church father Tertullian was swept away by its claims. Such a sharp departure from accepted biblical norms of prophecy, especially in its content and manner of expression, caused great alarm. The crisis became so acute that the church struggled for decades to quell the swelling numbers of adherents to Montanism.

Now in the 20th century, Christianity is once again facing a prophetic crisis. Its original impetus occurred in the Pentecostal and charismatic movements, which developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Recently, however, the momentum has come from the Vineyard and the Signs and Wonders movements, which have spread rapidly among churches that have held traditionally to the "cessationist" viewpoint regarding New Testament prophecy. These groups essentially argue that prophets and prophecy are active today as they were in the first-century church. Defense of this practice of "prophecy" has recently come from

F. David Farnell is Chairman of the Department of Ministerial Studies, Southeastern Bible College, Birmingham, Alabama.

\* This is article three in the four-part series, "Is the Gift of Prophecy for Today?"



## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (2 of 14)

Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 65

cy in ordinary New Testament churches was not equal to Scripture in authority, but was simply a very human—and sometimes partially mistaken—report of something the Holy Spirit brought to someone's mind.<sup>5</sup> New Testament prophecy consists of "telling something God has spontaneously brought to mind."<sup>6</sup> In another place he terms New Testament prophecy as "an unreliable human speech act in response to a revelation from the Holy Spirit."<sup>7</sup> He admits that his concept is a "somewhat new definition of the nature of Christian prophecy."<sup>8</sup>

Grudem's definition of prophecy

He takes his definition from both cessationists and charismatics. In common with the former he understands prophecy as noncompetitive with the authority of the canonical New Testament because of the close of the canon at the end of the apostolic era. On the other hand he concurs with the charismatic understanding that prophecy preserves "the spontaneous, powerful working of the Holy Spirit, giving edification, encouragement, and comfort," which speaks directly to the needs of the moment and causes people to realize that 'truly God is among you.'<sup>9</sup> According to Grudem, Old Testament prophets are not comparable to New Testament prophets; instead, Old Testament prophets are to be compared with the New Testament apostles.<sup>10</sup>

Consequently New Testament prophets were "simply reporting in their own words what God would bring to mind, and . . . these prophecies did not have the authority of the words of the Lord."<sup>11</sup>

Much more commonly, prophet and prophecy were used of ordinary Christians who spoke not with absolute divine authority, but simply to report something God had laid on their hearts or brought to their minds. There are many indications in the New Testament that this ordinary gift of prophecy had authority less than that of the Bible, and even less than that of recognized Bible teaching in the early church.<sup>12</sup>

5 Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 14.

6 Wayne A. Grudem, "Why Christians Can Still Prophecy: Scripture Encourages Us to Seek the Gift Yet Today," *Christianity Today*, September 16, 1988, 29. See these notes, 124.

7 Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 95.

8 Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, xv.

9 Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 15.

10 Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, 71.

11 Accordingly the New Testament prophets at Corinth were "speaking merely human words to report something God brings to mind." That is, sometimes the prophet was accurate and sometimes not. Depending on the circumstances, the prophet could be "mistaken" (Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 67, 96).

12 Grudem, "Why Christians Can Still Prophecy," 30.

In other words, prophecy depended on revelation from the Holy Spirit, but the prophet could understand it imperfectly, report it inaccurately, or both.<sup>13</sup>

According to Grudem, only New Testament apostles spoke inspired words.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the words of the New Testament prophets were not inspired as were those of Old Testament prophets.<sup>15</sup> This leaves him with two forms of New Testament prophecy: nonauthoritative "congregational" prophecy and authoritative (i.e., apostolic) prophecy.

The crucial point in Grudem's thesis is that the apostles, not the New Testament prophets, were the true successors of the Old Testament prophets and, like their earlier counterparts, spoke under the authority derived from the plenary verbal inspiration of their words.<sup>16</sup> This apostolic gift is distinguished from the gift of prophecy exercised at Corinth (cf. 1 Cor. 12-14), Thessalonica (1 Thess. 5:19-21), Tyre (Acts 21:4), Ephesus (19:6), and by others such as Agabus (11:28; 21:10-11). Only the general content of this secondary prophecy can be vouched for, with allowances made for its being partially mistaken.

As a result, the New Testament gift of prophecy was allegedly open to being discredited without blame (Acts 21:4), being critically assessed by the whole congregation (1 Cor. 14:29), and being rejected outright as subordinate to Paul's apostolic revelations (vv. 37-38). According to Grudem, "these prophecies did not have the authority of the words of the Lord."<sup>17</sup> Therefore Grudem posits a sharp discontinuity between Old Testament prophets and New Testament prophets. New Testament prophets did not stand in line with their Old Testament counterparts. According to Grudem qualitative differences exist between Old Testament and New Testament prophets and prophecy, especially in their accuracy and authority.<sup>18</sup>

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., 40-41.

15 Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, 69-70. Grudem draws on 1 Corinthians 12-14 as his principal source regarding "secondary" (i.e., nonapostolic) prophecy.

16 Ibid., 1-113.

17 Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 67, 96.

18 Maudlin adds the following to this thought: "According to Grudem—and KCF [Kansas City Fellowship] and Vineyard leaders agree—there is a discontinuity between canonical revelation found in the Bible and the revelation received by modern day prophets" (Maudlin, "Seers in the Heartland," 20).

2 NT prophecies.

## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (3 of 14)

Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 57

trary to his view that the authority of New Testament "congregational" prophecy does not extend to the words spoken by the prophets. Grudem admits that according to *Didache* 11.7, post-apostolic church prophets "were speaking with a divine authority that extended to their actual words."<sup>22</sup> In 11.7, the *Didache* notes that "you must neither make trial of nor pass judgment on any prophet who speaks forth in the spirit. For every (other) sin will be forgiven, but this sin will not be forgiven" (cf. Matt. 12:31). Here the thrust of the passage emphasizes that the authority of the New Testament prophet extended to the words of the prophecy uttered.

Grudem tries to counter this manifest contradiction to his hypothesis by stating that *Didache* 11.7 "almost directly contradicts Paul's instructions in 1 Corinthians 14:29" regarding the evaluation of prophets. Because of this, he hastily dismisses the data on New Testament prophets and prophecy supplied by the *Didache* in this verse and throughout the entire work.<sup>23</sup> However, Grudem has erroneously interpreted 11.7. The way in which the *Didache* refers to a prophet as one "who speaks forth in the Spirit" (*ἀλoύβρα ἐν πνεύματι*, 11.7) indicates that a prophet was not to be tested while he was giving the prophecy. After setting forth the prophecy, a prophet's behavior and accuracy (i.e., the prophetic content) could be used as legitimate means of testing and determining the genuineness of the prophet (cf. *Didache* 11.8-12). Furthermore, according to *Didache* 11.11, while prophets may not be judged during their act of prophesying, their genuineness was to be judged by the community. In continuity with Paul's insistence that prophets and their prophecy be tested (1 Cor. 14:29) and John's instruction to test a prophet and his prophecy (1 John 4:1-3), the *Didache* asserts that prophets and their prophecies were to be tested.<sup>24</sup> Though a surface reading of the *Didache* may give the impression that it rejects the testing of a prophet, an examination of the context of 11.8-12 makes it clear that this was not the case. The issue in testing seems to be the *time* of the testing rather than if a prophet was to be tested. Means of evaluating a true prophet are given in 11.8: "Not everyone who speaks forth in the Spirit is a prophet, but only if he has the kind of behavior which the Lord approves. From his behavior, then, will the false prophet and the true prophet be known." Prophets were to be judged on the basis of lack of greed for gain, consistency in doctrine and practice, and demonstration of knowing the ways of God.<sup>25</sup> Therefore this

<sup>22</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 107.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Didache* 11.7-12.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

## II.

## SOME WEAKNESSES OF GRUDEM'S HYPOTHESIS

This newly proposed theory has multiple weaknesses.<sup>19</sup> These show that Grudem's view contrasts with that of the New Testament concerning prophecy.

## A. CONTINUITY OF OLD TESTAMENT AND NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECY

One of Grudem's fundamental assumptions is the positing of a sharp discontinuity between Old and New Testament prophets. His case for an unauthoritative "congregational" prophecy in 1 Corinthians 12-14 and elsewhere in the New Testament rests on assuming a discontinuity between Old and New Testament prophecy. This premise of a strong discontinuity is fallacious for several reasons. Though these have been delineated in the two previous articles in this series, they are now applied directly to Grudem's hypothesis.

① *Standards for evaluating prophets in the postapostolic church of the second century.* The postapostolic early church judged New Testament prophets on the basis of the standards set forth for prophets in the Old Testament. New Testament prophets who prophesied falsely were considered false prophets on the basis of Old Testament standards of evaluation. Thus Grudem's assertion that New Testament prophets could be mistaken is not valid. Prophets in both eras who were wrong or inaccurate were shown to be false prophets by their false prophesying. As shown in the first article of this series, early postapostolic Christians utilized Old Testament standards to judge later prophets. This may be seen, for example, by Anonymous's or Epiphanius's handling of the Montanist controversy. The criteria set forth in the Old Testament for prophets was used to condemn the excesses of Montanus and his followers for their false or "mistaken" prophecies.<sup>20</sup>

Grudem also acknowledges that the *Didache*<sup>21</sup> contains statements contradictory to his hypothesis. *Didache* 11 is directly con-

<sup>19</sup> This article is intended to be selective, not exhaustive. For additional weaknesses of Grudem's hypothesis, the reader is directed to two other articles (Saucy, "Prophecy Today? An Initial Response," 1-5, and Thomas, "Prophecy Rediscovered? A Review of *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*," 70-84).

<sup>20</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 5.16.7-9; Epiphanius, *Panarion* 48.2.4; cf. 48.8. It is also important to note Epiphanius cites the fulfillment of Agabus's predictions of famine in Acts 11:27-28 as a clear demonstration that true prophetic prophecies come true. He noted that their word "was not mistaken," and in order to prove that Agabus's prophecies were right and that he was a genuine prophet, the Scripture added the phrase "which occurred in the time of Claudius Caesar." Epiphanius then referred to 1 Timothy 4:1-3 where Paul warned about some who would depart from sound teaching, and he applied this passage to the Montanists.

<sup>21</sup> *Didache* 11-13 contains specific rules for dealing with prophets and their prophecies.



## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (4 of 14)

Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 69

An additional approach of Grudem is to dismiss the *Didache* completely as written by someone "who was out of touch with mainstream apostolic activity and teaching."<sup>27</sup> Dismissing this evidence is convenient for his hypothesis. However, several arguments reveal his conclusion to be hasty.<sup>28</sup> Although Eusebius places the *Didache* among the *vōba*, or noncanonical books,<sup>29</sup> some in the early church, such as Clement of Alexandria, appear to have understood it as Scripture.<sup>30</sup> Athanasius said that while the work was not in the canon, it enjoyed a prominent position among books "appointed by the Fathers to be read by those who newly join us."<sup>31</sup> Therefore, although the book admittedly is noncanonical, these citations indicate that it enjoyed high regard in the early church.<sup>32</sup>

Some patristic scholars have argued for an early date for the *Didache*. Audet dates it around A.D. 60.<sup>33</sup> Even if one does not agree with him, the *Didache* still reflects an early date. After an extensive discussion, Kraft concludes that the *Didache* evidences

however, the stress is on ridding the church of greedy self-seeking men who seek to live off the church (11.3-6). Scripture commands such a thought (2 Thess. 3:6-10).

*Didache* 16.2 warns that "the whole time of your faith shall not profit you except that you be found perfect [*τελειωθῆτε*] at the last time." In context, the emphasis seems to be on the loss of reward rather than salvation, as seen in the phrase "at the last time" which apparently refers to the judgment of believers (cf. *Didache* 16.1, 6-7, which is in harmony with 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10). Furthermore the word "perfect" should be translated "you should be matured" and does not connote sinless perfection needed for salvation (cf. *Didache* 6.2; 10.5). Paul used cognates of this word meaning "maturity" in Ephesians 4:13 (*τελειωθῶ*) and Philippians 3:15 (*τελειωθῶ*). The *Didache*'s statement regarding maturity is in harmony with New Testament emphases elsewhere (Rom. 6:1-14; 8:13; 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 6:10-20; 2 Cor. 5:11; 7:1; 1 Pet. 4:18). In light of this, Grudem's objections do not reflect a close scrutiny of the surrounding contexts and verses themselves (contra Grudem, *Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 106-8).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>28</sup> The full title of the *Didache* is *Διδαχὴ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῶν ἀποστόλων τοῖς ἐξωθεν* ("The Teaching of the Lord by the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles"). The title reflects the implication that the book contains the teaching of the Lord and the apostles.

<sup>29</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.25.4.

<sup>30</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* 1.20.

<sup>31</sup> Athanasius, *Festal Letter* 39.

<sup>32</sup> For further information, see Robert A. Kraft, *Barnabas and the Didache*, vol. 3 in *The Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Robert M. Grant (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1965), 72-73.

<sup>33</sup> This early date is based on several arguments that have not been accepted by all patristic scholars and on the belief that the document is genuine and should in fact be associated with the apostles around the time of the writing of the gospels: "La *Didache*; est contemporaine des premiers écrits évangéliques" (Jean-Paul Audet, "La date et le lieu d'origine," in *La Didache: Instructions des Apôtres*, ed. J. Gaudin et al. (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1958), 197).

68 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA / January-March 1993

verse does not contradict 1 Corinthians 14:29 but stands in direct contradiction to Grudem's view. The *Didache* cannot be so easily dismissed.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Grudem's unwarranted dismissal of the *Didache* cannot be overly stressed. He cites additional passages that he alleges are contradictory to New Testament teaching (*Didache* 1.6; 4.14; 6.3; 7.1-4; 8.1; 9.1-5; 10.7; 11.5; 16.2). On this basis he refuses to accept the data on New Testament prophets and prophecy supplied by the *Didache*. However, none of the examples he cites are actual contradictions to the New Testament. For example in 1.6 the writer urged readers to keep their aims until they knew to whom the money was being given. In the context (1.4-5), the writer had just referred to Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount regarding the blessedness of giving (Matt. 5:38-42). The apothegm essentially was warning that one should be wise about giving. The stress is on giving to those in genuine need (cf. 2 Thess. 3:7-12). No real contradiction exists. This emphasis is in harmony with Jesus' words in Matthew 7:6 about not giving what is holy to the dogs.

*Didache* 4.14 states that one should confess sins in the congregation. This is in harmony with James 5:16, which deals with corporate confession of sins. In context, it is a prerequisite for meaningful community worship, not for salvation.

*Didache* 6.3 warns the readers to "keep strictly from that which is offered to idols." However, in the context, the writer is warning about someone being led astray from the Lord's teaching (*Didache* 6.1-2) through avenues such as temptation to participate in idolatry (cf. "the Way of Death," *Didache* 5.1-2). This is in harmony with Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 10:28, "if anyone should say to you, 'this is meat sacrificed to idols,' do not eat" (cf. 1 Cor. 10:20-21 where Paul warned the Corinthians not to fellowship at pagan feasts). Revelation 2:20-23 also warned the church of Thyatira against eating food sacrificed to idols.

*Didache* 7.1-4 is stressing the need for converts to be baptized (cf. Matt. 28:19-20). The writer enunciated different ways in which a person could be baptized (John the Baptist baptized in "running water" known as the Jordan). Warm or cold water is not unscriptural either. Nothing is wrong with a tradition of fasting before baptism. No Scripture would negate this or make it unbiblical.

In *Didache* 8.1, the point of the passage is not the command to fast on Wednesdays and Fridays. An examination of the context (8.1-2) reveals that the writer was stressing the need for readers to disassociate themselves clearly from the practice of hypocrisy in fasting. That is, fasting must be sincere, so those who were fasting were to avoid associating with those who were not.

*Didache* 8.3 urges the reader to pray the Lord's Prayer three times daily (e.g., Matt. 6:9-13). The practice of three times daily may perhaps reflect the Old Testament example of Daniel (Dan. 6:10). At any rate, nothing is unbiblical about the number three.

In *Didache* 9.1-5, nothing is unbiblical in the suggested communion service when it is compared with 1 Corinthians 10:20-26. The service essentially follows Paul's stipulations regarding the cup and the bread. In the *Didache* the cup is merely mentioned before the bread. In *Didache* 9.5 the exclusion from communion is further defined: "Give not that which is holy to the dogs." By this phrase, the writer seems to have been excluding the unlearned from participation in communion. Apparently only those who had made a public identification with Christ in baptism were considered worthy participants, which is not without biblical precedent (cf. Acts 2:38). Christ warned that the one who does not confess Him before men will be denied by Christ before angels (cf. Luke 12:8-9).

In *Didache* 10.7 the holding of communion services by prophets at various times was most likely because of their itinerant wanderings and because genuine prophets were led by the Spirit of God (cf. *Didache* 11.7-10). This genuineness of the true prophet ensures his proper care and concern for communion. The Scriptures do not speak of where and when communion should be served. Thus there is nothing unbiblical in *Didache* 10.7.

In *Didache* 11.5 apostles were told to stay only two days in a city. In the context,

## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (5 of 14)

## Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 71

was saying 'approximately this' or 'something like this.'<sup>39</sup>

Several arguments militate against Grudem's contention that Ignatius's prophecy supports Grudem's hypothesis. First, Ignatius claimed that he spoke with God's voice (*θεοῦ φωνῆ*). This assertion would hardly support Grudem's contention that New Testament prophets could be mistaken, especially when Ignatius equated his prophecy with "God's own voice." This clearly intimates that New Testament "congregational" prophecy was considered totally authoritative in the postapostolic early church. Second, Ignatius claimed to have supernatural knowledge of the divisions in the Philadelphian community of believers. This information did not come "from any human being" (*ὅτι διὰ σαρκὸς διδωμένων οὐκ ἔγνω*) but from the Holy Spirit (7.2). He rested the accuracy and authority of his prophecies on the miraculous source of his information. For Ignatius, the Holy Spirit served as the guarantor of the accuracy of his prophesying. Third, Grudem's assertion that the prophecy of 7.2 is a "summary" of 7.1, which supports his contention for prophecy of "general content," is doubtful. The prophecy of 7.2 supplies too much precise information for Grudem's argument to be valid that 7.2 summarizes 7.1. Ignatius seems to have given a separate prophecy in 7.2, which added additional explicit prophetic content to that of 7.1.<sup>40</sup> Fourth, Ignatius introduced his prophecy in 7.2 by the phrase *τὸ μέγα . . . ἔγνω ὅτι*, the same phrase used in both the Old and New Testaments to introduce exact ("word-for-word") prophetic content (Ezek. 6:1; 7:2; 11:17; Amos 1:3, 9, 13; 2:4; Acts 21:10-11; Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14, etc.).<sup>41</sup> This phrase

<sup>39</sup> Grudem, *Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 101.

<sup>40</sup> Even if Grudem's premise of summarization or "general content" be accepted for the sake of argument in 7.1-3, apostles often summarized or expanded Old Testament verses or prophecy (e.g., 2 Cor. 6:16-18 is introduced by "God said" [*εἰπὼν ὁ θεός*]; Eph. 4:8 is introduced by "it says" [*ὡς ἔχει*] referring to the Scriptures; also see 1 Cor. 2:9 and Matt. 2:23, which summarize Old Testament concepts but are not specific quotations from the Old Testament). Would Grudem suggest that these free expansions or interpretations were not "word for word" inspired or fully authoritative but somehow just "approximations" of what the Holy Spirit said in revelation? The same type of criticism can be applied to his citations of *The Epistle of Barnabas* (6.8; 9.2, 5), which introduces free paraphrases and interpretations of the Old Testament. Since the apostles used the Old Testament in a similar fashion under the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and their writings are considered inspired word for word, these epistles of Ignatius are not really doing anything unusual, nor do they support Grudem's contentions. Grudem is forcing his interpretation of New Testament prophecy on these passages in the Fathers' writings rather than conclusively demonstrating that they support his contentions.

<sup>41</sup> Though a debate exists on whether Ignatius was aware of the Book of Revelation (e.g., Ignatius, *To the Ephesians* 15.3; cf. Rev. 21:3; *To the Philadelphians* 6.1; cf. Rev. 3:12; the Spirit speaking to the churches in *To the Philadelphians* 7.2; cf. Rev. 2:7), the similarity of his usage of this phrase (*τὸ μέγα . . . ἔγνω ὅτι*) to biblical

a great deal of Hellenistic Jewish material<sup>34</sup> from early (i.e., first-century and early second-century) forms of Christianity.<sup>35</sup> In light of this, beyond the fact that the *Didache* is not canonical, there is no substantial reason for rejecting its testimony in such a wholesale fashion as Grudem does. If the *Didache* is allowed to speak for itself, it stands in contradiction to his hypothesis. Contrary to Grudem's assertions, the *Didache* provides an important and early indication of how the postapostolic early church regarded New Testament prophets and prophecy. The *Didache* substantiates the fact that New Testament prophets were considered fully authoritative in their prophetic pronouncements, even to the very words of the prophecy.<sup>36</sup>

A final example must suffice with reference to the postapostolic church fathers. Grudem cites Ignatius's *Epistle to the Philadelphians* 7.1-2. In 7.1 Ignatius wrote, "I cried out while I was with you, I spoke with a great voice,—with God's own voice [*θεοῦ φωνῆ*]. 'Give heed to the bishop, and to the presbytery and deacons.'<sup>37</sup> In 7.2, "the Spirit was preaching, and saying this, 'Do nothing without the bishop, keep your flesh as the temple of God, love unity, flee from divisions, be imitators of Jesus Christ, as was he also of his Father.'<sup>38</sup> Grudem presents this as an example supporting his contention for New Testament "congregational" prophecy having a content of a general kind (versus "apostolic" prophecy which extended to the very words): "The Holy Spirit

<sup>34</sup> E.g., "The Two Ways" (*Didache* 1.1-6.2; cf. *Epistle of Barnabas* 18-21).

<sup>35</sup> This does not prove, however, that the community was ethnically Jewish-Christian, for the Gentile church reflected its Jewish heritage for centuries. Furthermore, although the document reflects a very early date, it would be difficult to argue convincingly that the present form of the *Didache* is earlier than mid-second century. Kraft argues for reconsonal layers in the work. While some unknown individual put the *Didache* into its final form, he is at best seen as an "author-editor" who perhaps reproduced and reworked older material. See Kraft, *Barnabas and the Didache*, 1-3, 65-66, 72-77.

<sup>36</sup> This is also substantiated by the fact that *Didache* 11-13 contains significant concern for the impact prophetic pronouncements had on the Christian community. Unlike false teachers, false prophets were particularly difficult to handle, since they often appealed to divine authority for their pronouncements (cf. *Didache* 11.3-12; 13.1). In light of this the *Didache* presents basic criteria for evaluating whether a prophet is true or false: examine a prophet in terms of his behavior, teaching, and prophetic protocol.

<sup>37</sup> Grudem, *Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 101.

<sup>38</sup> Similar warnings are echoed elsewhere in Ignatius's writings: "do nothing without the bishop" (e.g., *Smyrnaeans* 8.1-2; *Trallians* 2.2; 7.2; *Magnesians* 4.1; 7.1); "love unity" (*Magnesians* 13.2; *Trallians* 11.2); "flee divisions" (*Philadelphians* 2.1; *Smyrnaeans* 7.2). His writings also have brief statements that reflect New Testament wording or concepts: "love unity" (e.g., Eph. 4:3); "flee from divisions" (e.g., 1 Cor. 1:10); "guard your flesh as the temple of God" (e.g., 1 Cor. 6:19; cf. 2 Clement 9:3); "be imitators of Jesus Christ" (e.g., John 6:19; 1 Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1).

## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (6 of 14)

Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 73

used in both sections. The same "clusters" of revelational-type words occur in 1 Corinthians 12-14 as occur in the context of Ephesians 2-3. For example *προφητῆς* and *προφητεῖα* are used in both (1 Cor. 12:28; 13:9; 14:1-6, 24, 31-32, 37, 39; Eph. 2:20; 3:5). So are *ἀποστολὴ* and *ἀποστόλοι* (1 Cor. 14:3-5, 12, 17, 26; Eph. 2:20-21), *ἐκκλησία* (1 Cor. 13:2; 14:2; Eph. 3:3-4, 9), *δοκλαμα* and *δοκλαμῆται* (1 Cor. 14:6, 26, 30; Eph. 3:3, 5), *ἀρχὴ* and its cognates (1 Cor. 14:25; Eph. 3:9), *ἀδελφότης* (1 Cor. 12:28-29; Eph. 2:20; 3:5), and *κοινωνία* (1 Cor. 12:8; Eph. 3:10). Grouping such technical terminology in a single context signals a reference to direct divine communication to an authoritative prophet. The presence of this type of communication in Ephesians 2-3 is not in doubt, and no significant basis exists for questioning a reference to it in 1 Corinthians 12-14.<sup>45</sup> So the case for contrasting "congregational" prophecy with "apostolic" prophecy falters at another point.

In light of the evidence, Grudem's premise of a sharp discontinuity between Old and New Testament prophecy is doubtful.

## B. GRAMMATICALLY RELATED WEAKNESSES

① *Misuse of Sharp's rule.* In the second article in this series, it was shown that Ephesians 2:20 indicates that apostles and New Testament prophets constituted the foundation of the church. As such, both apostles and New Testament prophets were involved in the important reception of revelation regarding such doctrines as Gentile inclusion in the composition of the church (Eph. 3:5-9). In contrast to this, Grudem interprets Ephesians 2:20 to mean "the apostles who are also prophets" solely constituted the doctrinal foundation of the church, thereby excluding New Testament prophets from such a foundational role. Grudem's most significant argument for equating "apostles" with "prophets" in Ephesians 2:20 stems from an application of a grammatical rule dealing with two nouns connected by the Greek word *καί* ("and") and governed by only one article. His argument is seriously flawed.

Regarding Ephesians 2:20 he writes,

The absence of the second article in *τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν* means that the writer views the apostles and prophets as a single group, and that we cannot immediately be sure whether that group has one or two components. But the grammatical structure clearly allows for the possibility that one group with one component is meant, for there are several instances in the New Testament where one definite article governs two or more nouns joined by *καί* and it is clear that one group with only one component (or

72 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA / January-March 1993

signals a conscious attempt by Ignatius to imitate biblical prophets who were considered inspired in the very words they utilized in prophecy. In light of this, it is more likely that Ignatius considered his prophecy to be "word-for-word" inspired and fully authoritative rather than only "generally" inspired in content.<sup>42</sup> In summary, when the data from the postapostolic church fathers are viewed closely, support for Grudem's contention melts away. Instead, the data support the contention for fully authoritative and accurate prophecy as maintained by the central thrusts of this series.

② *New Testament prophecy founded on Old Testament prophecy.* The discussion of the quotation of Joel 2:28-32 in Acts 2:17-21 has shown that New Testament prophecy is founded on and has a significant continuity with Old Testament prophetic phenomenon and experience. Indeed, Peter linked this beginning of New Testament prophecy with the prophetic phenomena of the Old Testament. The verse establishes a fundamental continuity between Old and New Testament prophecy.<sup>43</sup> This fundamental continuity contradicts Grudem's hypothesis that posits a substantial difference between Old Testament and New Testament prophets and prophecy.

③ *Similarity of vocabulary and phraseology for Old Testament and New Testament prophets.* It has been shown that the New Testament vocabulary and phraseology referring to both prophets and prophecy serve as a strong indication that the New Testament did not conceptualize any significant differences in prophetic expression between Old and New Testament prophets. Since the vocabulary and phraseology are the same, this would also indicate that the New Testament authors conceived of the existence of a fundamental continuity between these two eras of prophecy.

Importantly, the New Testament vocabulary is also uniform in referring to various New Testament prophets. Grudem's proposed identification of two forms of prophecy rests on differentiating prophecy in 1 Corinthians 12-14 from prophecy in Ephesians 2:20 and 3:5, the latter being "apostolic" prophecy and the former being "congregational" prophecy.<sup>44</sup> An inherent weakness in this distinction is reflected in a close scrutiny of technical terms

introductions of prophetic speech is sufficient to demonstrate his conscious molding of his prophecy to the style of both Old and New Testament prophets.

④ Though Ignatius's prophecy is noncanonical, this does not negate the fact that Ignatius, as a New Testament prophet, viewed his prophecy as fully authoritative down to the very words he used.

⑤ Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *The Charismatic Gift of Prophecy* (Memphis: Footstool, 1989), 8.

⑥ Grudem, *Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 64.

45 Robert L. Thomas, "The Spiritual Gift of Prophecy in Revelation 22:18," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 32 (June 1989): 205, n. 30.

## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (7 of 14)

## Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 75

Apostle-prophets, he says, were limited to the first-century church, but the other kind continues to the present day.

Though the case for this interpretation of Ephesians 2:20 may appear impressive, it is problematic for a number of reasons. Basically it rests on a fundamental error and a commonly misunderstood application of Sharp's rule.<sup>50</sup> The rule is as follows:

When the copulative *καί* connects nouns of the same case [viz. nouns (either substantive or adjective, or participles) of personal description, respecting office, dignity, affinity, or connection, and attributes, properties, or qualities, good or ill] if the article *ὁ*, or any of its cases, precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle: i.e., it denotes a further description of the first named person.<sup>51</sup>

Granville  
Sharp's  
Rule

Though challenged repeatedly, no one has succeeded in overturning or refuting it insofar as the New Testament is concerned.<sup>52</sup>

Yet four lesser known stipulations of Sharp's rule are often overlooked. These must be met if the two nouns in the construction are to be viewed as referring to the same person. They are these: (a) both nouns must be personal; (b) both nouns must be common nouns, that is, not proper names; (c) both nouns must be in the same case; and (d) both nouns must be singular.<sup>53</sup> Sharp did not clearly delineate these stipulations in conjunction with his first rule, so most grammars are ambiguous in these areas.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Grudem does not specifically mention the name "Granville Sharp," the person whose formulation of this grammatical phenomenon is widely recognized, but he seems to base his interpretation on principles derived from that rule.

<sup>51</sup> Granville Sharp, *Remarks on the Definitive Article in the Greek Text of the New Testament: Containing Many New Proofs of the Divinity of Christ, from Passages Which Are Wrongly Translated in the Common English Version* (Philadelphia: B. B. Hopkins, 1807), 3. This is the first of six rules articulated by Granville Sharp, who felt that the other five merely confirmed his first.

<sup>52</sup> The best modern defense of Sharp's rule is a seven-part series, "The Greek Article and the Doctrine of Christ's Deity," by C. Kuehne in the *Journal of Theology*. They appeared in the following issues: 13 (September 1973), 12-28; 13 (December 1973), 14-30; 14 (March 1974), 11-20; 14 (June 1974), 16-25; 14 (September 1974), 21-34; 14 (December 1974), 8-19; 15 (March 1975), 8-22. See also the excellent article by Daniel B. Wallace, "The Semantic Range of the Article-Kai-Noun Plural Construction in the New Testament," *Grace Theological Journal* 4 (1983): 59-84.

<sup>53</sup> Wallace, "The Semantic Range of the Article-Kai-Noun Plural Construction in the New Testament," 62. The present discussion is limited to the issue of the singular number of the nouns (i.e., qualification number four in the listed stipulations). For further discussion of the other three qualifications, see *ibid.*, 62-63, and *idem*, "The Validity of Granville Sharp's First Rule with Implications for the Deity of Christ" (paper presented to the Southwestern Section of the Evangelical Theological Society, March 4, 1988), 15-31.

<sup>54</sup> Wallace, "The Semantic Range of the Article-Kai-Noun Plural Construction in the New Testament," 62.

## 74 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA / January-March 1993

one person) is implied. In Ephesians 4:11 it is noteworthy: *ἔδωκεν τοῖς μὲν ἀποστόλοις, τοῖς δὲ προφήταις, τοῖς δὲ ἐναγγελισταῖς, τοῖς δὲ ποιμένοις καὶ διδασκάλοις*. The pastors and teachers are the same people but two different functions are named.<sup>46</sup>

At this point Grudem lists "most of the clear examples of this type of construction from the Pauline corpus, along with some scattered examples from elsewhere in the New Testament."<sup>47</sup> His list includes examples of the same person described with two or more titles (Rom. 16:7; Eph. 4:11; 6:21; Phil. 2:25; Col. 1:2; 4:7; Phil. 1; Heb. 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:25; 2 Pet. 3:18), phrases in which God is named with a similar form (Rom. 15:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; 11:31; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 1:3; 5:20; Phil. 4:20; Col. 1:3; 3:17; 1 Thess. 1:3; 3:11 [twice]; 1 Tim. 6:15; Titus 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:1, 11), nonpersonal objects occasionally referred to in this way (1 Thess. 3:7; Titus 2:13), and participles and infinitives in this type of construction (1 Cor. 11:29; Gal. 1:7; 1 Thess. 5:12).<sup>48</sup> Grudem concludes,

This does not imply that Eph. 2:20 *must* mean "the apostles who are also prophets," for there are many other examples which could be listed where one group with two distinct components is named (cf. Acts 13:50). Nevertheless, it must be noted that I was unable to find in the Pauline corpus even one clear example analogous to Acts 13:50 or 15:2, where two distinct people or classes of people (as opposed to things) are joined by *καί* and only one article is used. This may be more or less significant, depending in part on one's view of the authorship of Ephesians. But it should not be overlooked that when Paul wants to distinguish two people or groups he does not hesitate to use a second article (1 Cor. 3:8; 8:6; etc.; cf. Eph. 3:10). And I have listed above over twenty Pauline examples where clearly one person or group is implied by this type of construction.

So Eph. 2:20 views "the apostles and prophets" as one group. Grammatically, that group could have two components, but such an interpretation would not be exactly in accord with Pauline usage. If the author had meant to speak of a two-component group he certainly did not make this meaning very clear to his readers (as he could have done by adding another *τῶν* before *προφητῶν*). On the other hand, the large number of New Testament parallels shows that "the apostles who are also prophets" would have easily been understood by the readers if other factors in the context allowed for or favored this interpretation.<sup>49</sup>

From this he concludes that Ephesians 2:20 is speaking of apostle-prophets who are distinguished from those who are simply prophets described in other passages such as 1 Corinthians 12-14.

<sup>46</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, 97.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 97-98.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 98-100.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 100-101.



## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (8 of 14)

## Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 77

many passages where the members of the construction cannot be equated with each other and they thus constitute clear exceptions (e.g., Matt. 3:7; 17:1; 27:56; Acts 17:12).<sup>61</sup> His conclusion is, "Granville Sharp applied his rule only to singular, non-proper, personal nouns of the same case."<sup>62</sup> Wallace has cataloged the abuse of Sharp's rule by several grammatical works considered standards in the field of New Testament grammar. Regarding this abuse he notes,

But what about the *abuse* of the rule? Almost without exception, those who seem to be acquainted with Sharp's rule and agree with its validity misunderstand and abuse it. Virtually no one is exempt from this charge—grammarians, commentators, theologians alike are guilty. Typically, the rule is usually *perceived* to extend to plural and impersonal constructions—in spite of the fact that the evidence of the New Testament with reference to plural and impersonal nouns is contrary to this supposition.<sup>63</sup>

Moreover, he cites several well-known grammarians to illustrate his point.<sup>64</sup>

Although most commentaries consider the two terms ["pastors" and "teachers"] to refer to one group, we must emphatically insist that such a view *has no grammatical basis*, even though the writers who maintain this view almost unanimously rest their case on the supposed semantics of the article-noun-*kal*-construction. Yet, as we have seen, there are no other examples in the New Testament of this construction with nouns in the plural, either clearly tagged or ambiguous, which allow for such a possibility. One would, therefore, be on rather shaky ground to insist on such a nuance here [Eph. 4:11]—especially if the main weapon in his arsenal is syntax!<sup>65</sup>

Wallace affirms the validity of the rule for plural adjectives or participles, but indicates he has found no clear instances of the rule's applicability to plural nouns in the New Testament Koine Greek, papyri, or Hellenistic or classical Greek.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Wallace summarizes, "There are no clear instances of the plural construction involving nouns which speak of identity, while plural constructions involving participles, where the sense could be determined, always had identical referents" (Wallace, "The Validity of Granville Sharp's First Rule with Implications for the Deity of Christ," 10).

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>64</sup> For examples of applications of Sharp's rule that are insufficiently precise, see A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934), 786-89, and H. E. Dana and J. R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York: Macmillan, 1956), 147.

<sup>65</sup> Wallace, "The Semantic Range of the Article-Kal-Noun Plural Construction in the New Testament," 83 (italics his).

<sup>66</sup> Wallace, "The Validity of Granville Sharp's First Rule with Implications for the Deity of Christ," 15-31.

## 76 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA / January-March 1993

Many exegetes, including Grudem, reflect no awareness of these qualifications and hence apply Sharp's rule without proper refinements. For instance, though the fourth stipulation about the rule's limitation to singular nouns only was not *clearly* stated in the first rule, a perusal of Sharp's monograph reveals that he insisted that the rule applies absolutely to the singular only.<sup>67</sup> The limitation may be inferred by an argument from silence in his statement of the rule: "the latter always relates to the same person . . . i.e., it denotes a further description of the first-named person."<sup>68</sup> Later in the monograph he offers this clarification: "There is no exception or instance of the like mode of expression that I know of, which necessarily requires [that] a construction be different from what is laid down, *except* that the nouns be proper names, or in the plural number, in which there are numerous exceptions."<sup>69</sup> Again at another point he states that impersonal constructions are within the purview of the second, third, fifth, and sixth rules, but not the first or fourth.<sup>70</sup>

Middleton, whose early study on the Greek article is still highly respected,<sup>71</sup> was the first Greek grammarian to accept the validity of Sharp's rule. He notes many exceptions to Sharp's rule when plural nouns are involved.

What reason can be alleged, why the practice in Plural Attributives should differ from that in Singular ones? The circumstances are evidently dissimilar. A *single* individual may stand in various relations and act in divers capacities. . . . But this does not happen in the same degree with respect to Plurals. Though *one* individual may act, and frequently does act, in several capacities, it is not likely that a *multitude* of individuals should all of them act in the *same* several capacities.<sup>72</sup>

On the basis of an extensive analysis of plural nouns in comparable constructions in the New Testament, Wallace affirms that plural nouns are an exception to Sharp's rule. He has cited

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>68</sup> Sharp, *Remarks on the Definitive Article in the Greek Text of the New Testament*, 3.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-6.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 120. For an excellent discussion of these important qualifications regarding Sharp's rule, see Wallace, "The Validity of Granville Sharp's First Rule with Implications for the Deity of Christ," 4-5.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 7; cf. C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek*, 2d ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 94; 109, n. 3; 113, n. 2; 114-17.

<sup>72</sup> Thomas F. Middleton, *Doctrine of the Greek Article*, ed. H. J. Rose (1841), 20. The work was originally published in 1808. Wallace cites this quotation from the "new edition" of a work originally published in 1808 ("The Validity of Granville Sharp's First Rule with Implications for the Deity of Christ," 8).

## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (9 of 14)

Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 79

groups he does not hesitate to use a second article.<sup>71</sup> On this basis, he concludes that the single article with apostle and prophets in 2:20 dictates that Paul intended to equate the two. Yet in Ephesians 4:11—a verse that he uses in another way as a supporting grammatical analogy—Paul used *ἑξ ἑκαστοῦ τῶν ἀποστόλων*, "apostles" and one with "prophets": *ἐξ ἑκαστοῦ τῶν προφητῶν*, "on one hand he gave apostles and on the other, prophets" which clearly delineates New Testament prophets as a group separate from the apostles.<sup>72</sup> It is cogent reasoning that since Paul thus distinguishes between apostles and prophets in 4:11, he must have intended the same distinction in 2:20. This belies Grudem's interpretation. Second, as already noted, the grammatical analogy that Grudem cites in Ephesians 4:11—that is, the identification of "pastors" and "teachers"—provides no support for his theory, because the plural nouns forbid the pressing of Sharp's rule here too.

## C. PRESTIGE OF NEW TESTAMENT PROPHETS

Another weakness in Grudem's hypothesis is his failure to recognize the high degree of prestige enjoyed by New Testament prophets in the Christian community. As already shown from a correct understanding of Ephesians 2:20, New Testament prophets, in association with the apostles, held the honorable status of helping lay the foundation of the church. Their ranking in the list of gifted persons in 1 Corinthians 12:28 (cf. 14:1) places them second only to the apostles in usefulness to the body of Christ. As Geisler notes, "This exalted position Paul gives to the gift of prophecy is further indication that it [New Testament prophecy] is neither fallible nor inferior to the gift of prophecy in the Old Testament."<sup>73</sup>

New Testament prophets, along with the apostles, were recipients of special revelation regarding the mystery of the inclusion of Jews and Gentiles in the one universal body of Christ. The presence of Gentiles in such a relationship was unrevealed before

<sup>71</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, 101.

<sup>72</sup> F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 316, n. 29; cf. Charles Hodge, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 149. Grudem tries to surmount this problem by asserting that the prophets in Ephesians 4:11 are different from those in 2:20 (Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 69). However, his assertion is quite tenuous. Nothing in the context between these two verses signals any difference in meaning to a second group of prophets (Thomas, "Prophecy Rediscovered? A Review of *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*," 91; see also Geisler, *The Charismatic Gift of Prophecy*, 30-31).

<sup>73</sup> Geisler, *Signs and Wonders* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1988), 161.

78 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA / January-March 1993

This refined application of Sharp's rule removes Grudem's major foundation for equating apostles and prophets, since the rule is not applicable to Ephesians 2:20. In this verse Paul designated two separate groups, apostles and New Testament prophets, without equating one to the other.<sup>67</sup> Since the passage labels prophecy as a foundational gift, the conclusion is that New Testament prophecy has ceased along with the gift of apostleship.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>②</sup> *Invalid cross-references.* Furthermore the cross-references Grudem cites to support an equation of apostles and prophets<sup>69</sup> are invalid, because each of the examples is semantically unparalleled. Not one is a clear example of an application of Sharp's rule to plural nouns, as Grudem's position on Ephesians 2:20 requires. Many of the cross-references are singular nouns governed by a single article, to which Sharp's rule does apply,<sup>70</sup> so long as the nouns are personal and not proper nouns. These are a different grammatical entity from the plural-noun construction in Ephesians 2:20 and do not support his view of this verse. Sharp's rule is applicable to a few plural adjectives (e.g., Rom. 16:7; Col. 1:2), but the same principle does not apply to plural-noun constructions. This difference also holds between plural participles (e.g., Gal. 1:7; 1 Thess. 5:12) and plural nouns. Grudem's use of impersonal nouns as a grammatical parallel is also inaccurate (e.g., 1 Thess. 3:7) because Sharp's rule requires personal nouns. Space forbids an exhaustive citation of all the alleged parallels, but each of them is nonparallel for one of these reasons.

Thus none of the cross-references cited supports identification of prophets with apostles in Ephesians 2:20, since none of Grudem's cross-references presents an analogous construction. It is wrong, therefore, for him to base his view on this verse.

<sup>③</sup> *Disregard for Ephesians 4:11.* Another weakness in Grudem's reasoning regarding the equation of apostles and prophets in Ephesians 2:20 lies in his use of Ephesians 4:11 for support. Two aspects of Ephesians 4:11 militate against his conclusion. First, he argues, "When Paul wants to distinguish two people or

<sup>67</sup> Had Paul wished to equate the two, he could have done so clearly with the inclusion of a participial phrase (e.g., *τῶν δόξαντων*) or a relative clause ("apostles who also are prophets"). This would have removed any doubt about the two groups being equivalent (Dan McCartney, "Review of Wayne Grudem's *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*," *Westminster Theological Journal* 46 [Spring 1983]: 196).

<sup>68</sup> The issue of the cessation of prophecy will be discussed more fully in the fourth article in this series.

<sup>69</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, 101.

<sup>70</sup> Ephesians 6:21; Philippians 2:25; Colossians 4:7; Philemon 1; Hebrews 3:1; 1 Peter 2:25; 2 Peter 3:18.

## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (10 of 14)

Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 81

accepted as a true prophet of God, his words were never questioned, but each prophecy of a New Testament prophet, Grudem argues, had to be evaluated.<sup>76</sup> Herein lies a contrast, causing Grudem to conclude that the New Testament gift operated at a lower level of authority.<sup>78</sup>

① However, several arguments render Grudem's hypothesis tenuous. First, the needed critical evaluation resulted from a changed status of believers under the New Covenant. In accord with Joel 2:28-32 and Acts 2:17-21, the Holy Spirit was poured out on all believers. This does not mean that all Christians would be prophets, a possibility Paul negated in 1 Corinthians 12:29, "all are not prophets, are they?" It did, however, create the potential, according to Joel and Acts, that the gift of prophecy would be much more widely disseminated than to a limited group of prophets like those who spoke for the Lord in the theocratic community under the Old Covenant. As noted in the second article of this series, this expanded sphere of prophetic activity increased the need for care in discerning true prophecies from false prophecies.<sup>80</sup>

This is the need Paul tried to meet in 1 Corinthians 14:29-31. The larger the group of prophets, the more potential there was for abuse of prophecy by those who were not New Testament prophets. This danger became a reality in the latter part of the first century and beyond, as evidenced by John's warning: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1; cf. 2 Pet. 2:1-22; Jude 4, 11-16).

② Second, Grudem's picture of Old Testament prophecy and its prestige is highly idealized and rather unrealistic. His idealized picture is obtained substantially from historical hindsight rather than from an examination of the actual state of affairs existing at the time of the Old Testament prophets. A brief review reveals four relevant features of Old Testament prophecy: (1) The Israelites frequently disobeyed Old Testament prophets (such as Samuel, Elisha, and Jeremiah, to name only a few), even when their proclamations were authoritative as the very words of the Lord (e.g., 1 Sam. 13:8-14; Jer. 36:1-32), and put the prophets to

<sup>76</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, 58-66.

<sup>78</sup> D. A. Carson supports Grudem regarding these two levels of authority (D. A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987], 98).

<sup>80</sup> Gaffin stresses the central point. "The distinguishing or discrimination required functions to determine the source of the alleged prophecy, whether or not it is genuine, whether it is from the Holy Spirit or some other spirit; it does not sift worthwhile elements presumably based on revelation from those that are not" (Richard B. Gaffin, *Perspectives on Pentecost* [Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979], 70).

80 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA / January-March 1993

the New Testament era (Eph 3:5), but came to apostles and New Testament prophets as inspired utterances and writings such as the canonical Book of Ephesians. Reception and propagation of such revelation constituted the foundation of the church universal throughout the present age. New Testament prophets were vehicles for these revelations and held a high profile among early Christians for this reason.<sup>74</sup>

In light of this, Grudem's words do not match the high status of prophets upheld in the New Testament: "Prophecy in ordinary New Testament churches was not equal to Scripture in authority, but was simply a very human—and sometimes partially mistaken—report of something that the Holy Spirit brought to someone's mind."<sup>75</sup> Such a relegation of prophecy to a lesser status raises the question of how the early church could have guarded itself against hopeless doctrinal confusion. If prophets were at times used to convey inspired revelations and at other times were nonauthoritative and mistaken, who could distinguish their authoritative and accurate messages from the other kind?

#### THE NEED FOR CONSTANT EVALUATION OF NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECY

Grudem uses the call for evaluation of prophetic utterances in 1 Corinthians 14:29-31 as an argument for the existence of nonauthoritative congregational prophecy.<sup>76</sup> He maintains that Old Testament prophets were never challenged in this way because of the high regard in which they were held. For him, this signals a great difference between Old Testament and New Testament prophets; that is, New Testament prophets were not so prestigious.<sup>77</sup> After an Old Testament prophet was evaluated and

<sup>74</sup> To counter this argument in Ephesians 2:11-3:21, Grudem claims that Gentile inclusion in the church was revealed only to apostles and never to prophets. He lists 13 passages in which this revelation was given only to apostles (Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 61-64). His argumentation is self-defeating for two reasons. (1) Nine of the 13 passages were written by Luke, who was not an apostle and did not possess "apostolic prophecy" (e.g., Luke 24:46-47; Acts 1:8; 10:16; 34-36). By Grudem's standards Luke-Acts could not have been authoritative since it was not the work of an apostle. (2) Grudem lists Luke-Acts among New Testament books which were authoritative even though not written by apostles. He must admit that another gift, besides "apostolic prophecy" existed that was capable of conveying fully authoritative divine revelation. Most likely Luke possessed the gift of prophecy, which made him a vehicle for inspired revelation. For a refutation of Grudem on this point, see Thomas, "Prophecy Rediscovered? A Review of *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*," 90.

<sup>76</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 14.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 70-79.

<sup>77</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 17-23; *idem*, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, 82-105.

## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (11 of 14)

82 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA / January-March 1993

flight, threatening to kill them (e.g., 1 Kings 19:1-3). Amos's preaching in Bethel aroused such opposition that he had to flee from Bethel for his life (Amos 7:10-17). (2) Some prophets enjoyed greater status and prestige than others who were less famous (e.g., an unknown prophet in 1 Kings 20:35-43; cf. also 19:10). (3) The people threatened and otherwise strongly opposed some prophets like Jeremiah because of their status as prophets of the Lord. Jeremiah could hardly have been said to have enjoyed much of an authoritative status in Israel at such times, because his hearers disobeyed him, despised him, rejected him, beat him, and imprisoned him because of his prophetic ministry (e.g., Jer. 11:18-23; 12:6; 18:18; 20:1-3; 26:1-24; 37:11-38:28). (4) According to Jewish tradition, some prophets like Isaiah were tortured and assassinated rather than given great honor (cf. 1 Kings 18:13).<sup>81</sup>

③ Third, Jesus' words in Matthew 23:37 that Israel consistently despised, rejected, and killed her prophets hardly conveys the impression of great respect afforded the Old Testament prophets by their contemporaries. Nor does it suggest that their message was never questioned or rejected (cf. Heb. 11:33-40).

Old Testament prophets became revered only by later generations of Jewish people. They had little such prominence during their lifetime. Only as later generations reflected on their idolatrous past and disobedience to the prophets did the prophets gain a place of great esteem in the eyes of the people (cf. Ezra 9:1-11). This elite group of Old Testament spokesmen for the Lord experienced the anointing and influence of the Holy Spirit in a way that was not appreciated by their immediate listeners.

④ Fourth, the New Testament standard for evaluating prophets is comparable to relevant guidelines in the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 13 and 18 set forth the policy that a prophet was to be judged by his prophesying. Prophets were considered to be false on the basis of false prophesying. In the second century A.D., these same Old Testament principles and guidelines were used by Epiphanius and Anonymous to refute the Montanist heresy. Therefore these Old Testament standards for evaluating prophesies were applied to prophets as a basis for judging true from false prophets before, during, and after the New Testament era. As Saucy notes regarding the Pauline stipulation to evaluate prophesies, "This principle does not appear to be different than in the Old Testament and therefore does not seem persuasive of two lev-

81 Compare Hebrews 11:37-40 with Isaiah 6:9-10. Rabbinic tradition includes Isaiah among the persecuted heroes of faith alluded to by the writer of Hebrews in the passage cited (cf. Yeboam, 49b; Sanh. 103b).

Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 83

els of prophetic activity."<sup>82</sup> The New Testament furnishes no indication that New Testament-era Jews, particularly those who became apostles in the early church, considered the requirements for prophets in the Old Testament to have been abrogated or essentially modified in the New Testament.

## A. IDENTIFICATION OF EVALUATORS

Another weakness in Grudem's theory regarding New Testament prophecy is his method of handling 1 Corinthians 14:29, which reads, "And let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment." A critical issue in this statement concerns the identity of those "passing judgment" or "discerning" the validity of alleged prophetic pronouncements. Grudem raises a psychological point. <sup>the others</sup>

If we understand *οἱ ἄλλοι* to be restricted to a special group of prophets, we have much difficulty picturing what the rest of the congregation would do during the prophecy and judging. Would they sit during the prophecy waiting for the prophecy to end and be judged before knowing whether to believe any part of it? . . . Especially hard to believe is the idea that the teachers, administrators and other church leaders without special gifts of prophecy would sit passively awaiting the verdict of an elite group.<sup>83</sup>

Aside from the fact that this argumentation is nonexegetical in nature, it is weak in that reason and logic, to which he appeals, can also dictate that not everyone in the congregation would be in a position to evaluate prophecy, especially in a public setting.<sup>84</sup> Admittedly 1 John 4:1-3 urges a testing of spirits in a general sense by all Christians because of false prophecy and teaching, but Paul clearly indicated in 1 Corinthians 12:10 (regarding the "distinguishing of spirits") that not everyone possessed that special ability. That gift was dispensed to a limited number according to the sovereign will of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11; cf. v. 18). It is conspicuous that those possessing special ability in discerning were better equipped to pass judgment on congregational prophesies than the ones who did not possess the gift. This differentiation in evaluative capabilities within the congregation raises a loud contextual objection to the view that all members of the congregation in 1 Corinthians 14:29 were supposed to evaluate the prophets.

Farnell:  
the  
prophets  
evaluate

82 Saucy, "Prophecy Today? An Initial Response," 2.

83 Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, 60-62.

84 In addition, Aune notes, "The observation in verse 31 that 'you can all prophesy one by one' cannot mean everybody present, but 'all upon whom the spirit of prophecy comes'" (David Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983], 133).



## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (12 of 14)

Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 85

established prophets had to be verified continually.<sup>87</sup> Yet this passage does set down the general principle that any potential prophet needed to be scrutinized by other prophets. This principle invalidates Grudem's conclusion that a genuine prophet's message contained a mixture of truth and error.<sup>88</sup> The guideline established merely enforces the need for careful analysis of any prophet who claimed to speak by the Spirit of God to determine the source of his message. Once his source was identified as God, further examination was most likely unnecessary. The Holy Spirit served as the guarantor of the accuracy of the true prophet. Moreover, according to 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, even false prophets had potential to feign a true prophecy, so Paul encouraged a continued vigil. The regular ministry of prophets was to ensure the genuineness of prophets and prophecies as a safeguard against doctrinal heresies.

In summary, judging a prophecy does not imply that the gift could result in errant pronouncements.<sup>89</sup> The responsibility of New Testament prophets to weigh the prophecies of others does not imply that true prophets were capable of giving false prophecies, but that false prophets could disguise their falsity by occasional true utterances.

## THE INTERRUPTION OF PROPHECIES

Closely associated with the evaluation of prophecies is Grudem's contention that because a New Testament prophet's prophesying could be interrupted, the prophecy was nonauthoritative or fallible, that is, not from God (1 Cor. 14:30-32). According to Grudem, such an interruption would mean that the remainder of the prophecy could be lost. This interruption and supposed loss of the prophecy signals that the prophetic content was less authoritative; otherwise Paul would have shown "more concern for the preservation of these words and their proclamation to the church."<sup>90</sup>

However, because a prophecy could be interrupted does not in any way imply that the prophesying of the New Testament prophet was inferior or that some of the content of the prophecy could be lost. The thrust of verses 30-32 is that if a revelation is from God, the prophet will remain in conscious control of his mind and

<sup>87</sup> As has been seen, the *Didache* indicates that in the postapostolic church New Testament prophets who had gained a trustworthy reputation were not constantly evaluated (*Didache* 13.1; cf. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 226).

<sup>88</sup> Saucy's comment is pertinent. "The discrimination deals not with the level of prophetic authority, but with the separation of prophecy from that which is not prophecy" ("Prophecy Today? An Initial Response," 3).

<sup>89</sup> Contra Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, 67-70, 115-36, 242.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

84 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA / January-March 1993

"other" or "another" of a different kind  
"other" or "another" of the same kind

The most natural and grammatical antecedent of  $\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha$  in 14:29 is  $\pi\rho\phi\eta\tau\alpha\iota$  in the first half of the verse. Paul's use of  $\delta\lambda\lambda\alpha$  rather than  $\epsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\omega\varsigma$  indicates his intention to designate the same category of persons as those just referred to. Referring "the others" to other prophets is further confirmed by the use of  $\delta\lambda\lambda\omega$  immediately afterward in verse 30, where it is an evident reference to "another" prophet. This repetition of the same adjective, "other" or "another," shows that Paul still had prophets in mind when he used  $\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha$  in verse 29. In this statement, then, where interpretation is tedious, the contextual probabilities rest on the side of identifying those who evaluate prophetic utterances of others as being the prophets who apparently possessed the gift of discerning of spirits along with their prophetic gift.

Those prophets were to pass judgment on what other prophets said to ascertain whether their utterances came from the Holy Spirit or not. Just as interpretation was needed in conjunction with the exercise of tongues (1 Cor. 12:10c), discernment was needed to accompany prophecy (v. 10b).<sup>85</sup> Inspired spokesmen were in the best position to judge spontaneously whether a new utterance agreed with Paul's teaching (cf. Gal. 1:8-9; 2 Thess. 2:1-3) and generally accepted beliefs of the Christian community (1 Cor. 12:1-3).

As noted in the second article in this series, the context of 1 Corinthians 12:3 also sheds light on the need for evaluating prophets addressed in 14:29. Apparently false prophets had preached that Jesus was accused (12:3) even though they professed to be true prophets. In the face of such starkly erroneous prophesying, Paul warned them to evaluate each prophecy carefully to ensure that a genuine prophet had spoken. Some recognized voice was needed to declare whether the Holy Spirit was the source of that statement or that the person voicing a declaration was a false prophet.<sup>86</sup>

Thus 1 Corinthians 14:29 does not necessarily mean that es-

<sup>85</sup> This correlation is not explicit in 1 Corinthians 14, but is strongly implicit by virtue of the contextual flow of chapters 12-14 and the use of cognate words in 12:10 and 14:29 to depict the gift of discerning and the exercise of discerning (cf. Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians*, International Critical Commentary [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1914], 287, 321-22).

<sup>86</sup> Saucy adds an additional line of reasoning. "But are we sure that some who were used of God to bring true prophecies could not also at times declare prophecies which were not inspired from God? Grudem himself admits that a true prophet could apostatize and declare something as prophecy that in fact was a lie (cf. 1 Kings 13:18). If such is the case, how could the people tell when they were hearing the authoritative prophecy from God unless some evaluation was taking place?" (Saucy, "Prophecy Today? An Initial Response," 2).

## F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (13 of 14)

Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts? 87

## C. APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY VERSUS NEW TESTAMENT PROPHETIC PRONOUNCEMENTS

Grudem also contends that in 1 Corinthians 14:37-38 Paul rated the authority of Christian prophets below his own authority. Grudem uses this to support his view that New Testament prophetic authority was inferior to that of the apostles and hence inferior to Old Testament prophets also.<sup>94</sup> According to this view Paul's claim of authority in this passage means that New Testament "congregational" prophecy had less authority than "apostolic" prophecy. This understanding of Paul's words is not probable for important reasons. First, in 1 Corinthians 14:37-38 Paul was more likely asserting that if a Christian prophet is truly from God, his prophecies will concur with apostolic truth (cf. Gal. 1:8-9). False prophets and teachers constantly challenged apostolic authority and doctrine (e.g., Gal. 2:4-5; 2 Tim. 2:18; cf. Jude 3). In light of his own apostolic office, Paul's comparison between the Corinthian claims of authority and his own is best understood to teach that true prophets and their prophecies would be consistent with apostolic truth and would recognize Paul's words and commandments as coming directly from the Lord Jesus Christ. Any alleged prophet opposing apostolic standards and elevating himself to the role of God's only spokesman (1 Cor. 14:36) was to be recognized as false and his authority rejected (v. 38).

② Second, apostolic authority must be distinguished from prophetic authority. Saucy's point is pertinent.

Rather than seeing the differences in the authority of prophecy, it seems that the solution lies in the personal authority of an apostle of Jesus Christ. Both Paul's prophecy and true prophecies in the church were words inspired by the Spirit of God. Paul, however, in distinction from prophets of the church, carried personal authority as the commissioned representative of Christ.<sup>96</sup>

This personal authority as an apostle does not mean that Paul's prophecies were any more authoritative than those of an anonymous Christian prophet. When an apostle prophesied and an anonymous Christian prophet utilized his or her gift, both were equally authoritative and infallible because the Source of both apostolic prophecy and Christian prophets was the Holy Spirit.

## CONCLUSION

In light of the substantial negation of the major premises of Grudem's hypothesis, his assertions regarding two forms of New

<sup>94</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, 85-86.

<sup>96</sup> Saucy, "Prophecy Today? An Initial Response," 6.

86 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA / January-March 1993

will. In other words a prophecy which is truly from God is evidenced by an orderly and rational manner of presentation. Geisler stresses the need to consider the cultural and religious environment at Corinth in evaluating these verses.

The fact that prophets could be interrupted does not imply that their message was not from God. Rather, it reveals that "the spirits of prophets are subject to control of prophets" (1 Corinthians 14:32). Ecstatic utterances were common among pagans, such as the Corinthians once were. In these occult prophecies the one giving the utterances was overpowered by the spirit giving the utterances. By contrast, Paul is saying that if a revelation is truly from God, then the prophet will remain in conscious control of his mind and will. In short, if it is really of God, it can wait.<sup>91</sup>

The *Shepherd of Hermas* also reflects this same principle that the genuine prophet remains in rational control while supernatural power inspires him during the prophetic utterance.<sup>92</sup> However, in dealing with the Montanists, Anonymous dismissed their prophesying as irrationally ecstatic based on his understanding of Old Testament prophets who remained rational even in the prophetic state.<sup>93</sup> Hence interruption of New Testament prophets does not imply some inferior form of "congregational" prophecy as maintained by Grudem. Orderly procedures (and possibility of interruption) functioned as a guard against irrationally ecstatic prophets (i.e., false prophets).

<sup>91</sup> Geisler, *Signs and Wonders*, 168. The social and moral practices of those at Corinth must be considered in evaluating Paul's warning for the orderly expression of the prophetic gift. In Greek religious cults, with which the Corinthians were familiar, ecstatic and irrational utterances were the norm. At Corinth itself the cult of Aphrodite, the oriental goddess of fertility, was practiced. Thousands of temple prostitutes were involved in attending the shrine and some of the basest religious practices abounded there (Strabo, *Geography* 8.6.20-22; cf. 1 Cor. 8:1, 10). Paul linked such practices to demonic influence (10:20-21). So it would be reasonable to suppose that the Christian practice of prophecy had the potential of being corrupted by false prophets who were linked to the religious excesses at Corinth and other Greek cities. Associated with Apollo, the most famous oracle was at Delphi, where the giving of oracles was *ἐκ μαντικῆς*. Here the Pythia, or female spokesman for the god, became known as the *μυσήφρος*. The Pythia sat on a tripod over a cavity in the earth from which it is alleged that an oracular spirit in the form of smoke arose and gave her inspiration to speak (i.e., this frenzy was enhanced by alleged magical properties in bay leaves which she chewed, for such leaves were considered to be Apollo's favored plant). The result was such that the Pythia burst forth with inarticulate and enigmatic sounds similar to *glossolalia* (Strabo, *Geography* 17.1.43). Delphi was about 50 miles from Corinth, and a statue and temple of Apollo were located at Corinth. Also see *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, s.v. "Prophet," by C. H. Peisaker and C. Brown, 3:76.

<sup>92</sup> *Shepherd of Hermas*, Mandate xi.2-5 (43.2-5). Aune notes, "For Hermas the ability to provide oracular responses to inquirers implies control by the prophet over the supernatural power which inspires him (xi.6); since the Spirit of God is not subject to such human control, it is not he but an evil spirit who speaks through the prophet" (Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity*, 227).

<sup>93</sup> *Ecclesiastical History* 5.16.7-9.

F. David Farnell, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" (14 of 14)

BIBLIOTHECA SACRA 150 (January-March 1993): 89-105

## WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF 1 JOHN?

Gary W. Derickson

W

ithin modern-day scholarship two distinct and disparate views have developed concerning the message of 1 John. They have arisen as a consequence of two variant perceptions of the purpose of the epistle. These are the Tests of Life (Salvation) and Tests of Fellowship (Practice of Life) views. The purpose of this article is to describe these views and how they are defended and to evaluate each view.

### TESTS OF LIFE VIEW

#### THE VIEW DESCRIBED

The Tests of Life view, the older of the two positions, commands the majority of scholarly support.<sup>1</sup> The basis of this view is the dominance given the purpose statement in 1 John 5:13 in determining the overarching message and controlling the interpretation of difficult passages. According to this view John's pur-

Gary W. Derickson is Assistant Professor of Bible, Western Baptist College, Salem, Oregon.

<sup>1</sup> Proponents of this view include Raymond Brown (*The Epistles of John*, The Anchor Bible [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982]; John Calvin (*The Gospel according to St John 11-21* and *The First Epistle of John*, Calvin's New Testament Commentaries, trans. T. H. L. Parker [reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959-61]; C. H. Dodd, *The Johannine Epistles*, Moffatt New Testament Commentary [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946]; D. Edmond Hebert, *The Non-Pauline Epistles and Revelation*, rev. ed. vol. 3 of *An Introduction to the New Testament* [Chicago: Moody, 1977]; idem, "An Expository Study of 1 John," *Bibliotheca Sacra* (April 1988 through July 1990); Robert Law, *The Tests of Life: A Study of the First Epistle of St. John* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1969); John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The Gospel according to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988); I. Howard Marshall, *The Epistles of John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978); John R. W. Stott, *The Letters of John*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964); and Brooke F. Westcott, *The Epistles of John* (reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966).

88 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA / January-March 1993

Testament prophecy cannot stand. Close examination of his hypothesis reveals critical weaknesses and also outright contradictions of the biblical data. Hence this major justification of the practice of "congregational" prophecy among such charismatic groups as the Vineyard and Sign and Wonders movements evaporates. The idea of a bifurcation of the prophetic gift into two distinct forms has no support either from the biblical data or from the church's handling of the Montanist controversy in the second century. Such a hypothesis is also invalid for promoting dialogue between cessationist and noncessationist camps, because it does not provide valid grounds for the justification of the present practice of prophecy among noncessationist groups. Grudem's hypothesis also should be viewed with alarm. Since prophecy has the assumption of revelational authority from the Holy Spirit, the idea of "mistaken" prophecy has the potential of doing untold harm to the church.

The fourth and final article in this series will deal with the question of the cessation of the prophetic gift. Various reasons will be delineated to demonstrate that miraculous gifts like New Testament prophecy are no longer in operation in the worship and practice of the church.

Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?"  
*Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*  
 (1 of 13)

## Appendix B

### Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?

Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, a professor at Princeton Seminary, popularized the argument that miraculous gifts of the Spirit were given only to a few, namely to the apostles and Stephen and Philip. The purpose of these gifts, according to Warfield, was to authenticate the apostles as trustworthy teachers of doctrine. When the apostles died, therefore, the gifts necessarily passed away with them. Warfield wrote in 1918,

It is very clear from the record of the New Testament that the extraordinary charismata were not (after the very first days of the church) the possession of all Christians, but supernatural gifts to the few.<sup>1</sup>

These gifts were not the possession of the primitive Christian as such: nor for that matter of the Apostolic Church or the Apostolic age for themselves; they were distinctly for the authentication of the Apostles. They were part of the credentials of the Apostles as the authoritative agents of God in founding the church. Their function thus confined them to distinctively the Apostolic Church, and they necessarily passed away with it.<sup>2</sup>

Even today Warfield's modern theological descendants are still arguing in essentially the same way. Listen to how Peter Masters formulates this argument. He writes:

Every example of healing (by the instrumentality of a person) in the Book of Acts is performed by an apostle, or an apostle's deputy, and if we go strictly by the biblical record, the

## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (2 of 13)

Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles? 231

If, as Warfield and his theological descendants maintain, the primary purpose of signs and wonders was to authenticate the apostles, why do Stephen and Philip do signs and wonders? If they reply that it is because the apostles laid hands on them and that they were close associates with the apostles, they have still not answered the question. Why did the apostles lay hands on them to give them the power to do signs and wonders? If signs and wonders were meant to authenticate the apostles, there is absolutely no reason for Stephen and Philip to do miracles. Permitting anyone other than apostles to do signs and wonders actually weakens the value of signs and wonders as an authenticating tool of the apostles' ministry. Here is a serious inconsistency to which I have not found even a remotely satisfactory answer among those who teach cessationism.

These authors have a much deeper problem, however, than ignoring the exception that disproves their interpretation. Those who argue like Masters are using a flawed method of interpreting the Bible's narrative literature,<sup>6</sup> a method that is virtually guaranteed to lead to wrong conclusions.

Let me illustrate what I mean.

Even if it were true that we could only find a few people in the book of Acts who actually displayed supernatural gifts, that would not mean that only a few people in the New Testament received supernatural gifts. The narrative literature of the Bible only tells the story of the few. The book of Acts, for example, has Peter for its main character in the first twelve chapters, with a very small role played by John and somewhat larger roles played by Stephen and Philip. From chapter thirteen to the end of the book, Paul is the dominant character. The narrative literature of the Bible is the story of special people, people who play significant roles in God's redemptive history. The overwhelming majority of biblical examples of both godly ministry and passionate devotion are drawn from the lives of the few, very special, and exceptional characters who became prominent in salvation history. It is impossible, therefore, to justify logically or biblically a hermeneutical principle (1) which is primarily based on the observation that only a few in the Bible possess or do certain things, and (2) which functions to justify the cessation of these things.

For instance, Paul is the only truly significant church planter in the New Testament, and most of the apostles seem to stay in Jerusalem rather than going out to plant churches. Does that mean that only the few were intended to plant churches, and that when Paul died, church planting also died? Even though the observation is correct, the conclusion is false, because it contradicts New Testament commands to evangelize and disciple the world (see Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:47; and Acts

This is a  
false  
conclusion as  
we are not  
commanded to  
perform miracles.

Surprised by the Power of the Spirit

230

only three "deputies" who had any involvement in healing were Stephen, Philip and possibly Barnabas if Acts 14:3 includes him. (We shall comment in a moment on the hypothetical possibility that there were others also.) Outside this select group there are no "gifted" healing activities actually recorded in Acts or the epistles. . . .

In these days of charismatic confusion we need constantly to draw attention to the texts which prove that signs and wonders were peculiar to the apostolic band, and were not bestowed generally.<sup>3</sup> (author's emphasis)

At first sight, both Warfield's statement and Masters' argument seem to carry conviction. On close examination, however, both of these arguments fall apart.

## WERE SUPERNATURAL GIFTS LIMITED TO A FEW?

I mentioned the following earlier in the book, but it bears repetition. The first difficulty with the argument that only the apostles and their close associates did signs and wonders is that it ignores an insurmountable exception. Everyone admits that Stephen and Philip did signs and wonders.<sup>4</sup> Everyone admits that the apostles laid hands on Stephen and Philip. And although Acts 6:6 does not say that Stephen and Philip were given miraculous powers when the apostles laid hands on them, I would be willing to grant that for the sake of the argument.<sup>5</sup>

In each instance when the book of Acts uses the expression "signs and wonders" it refers to an abundance of miracles done by those who are preaching Jesus. Who engages in a ministry of signs and wonders in the book of Acts? Luke tells us twice that the apostles were doing "many signs and wonders" (Acts 2:43; 5:12). When he gives us specific illustrations of apostolic miracles, he only shows us miracles worked through Peter or Paul. The only other specific examples of a ministry of signs and wonders are the ministries of Stephen and Philip.

Why does Luke pick two apostles and two nonapostles to illustrate the signs and wonders ministry? Doubtless there were many stories of signs and wonders on the part of other apostles, but Luke has passed over these stories because they did not suit his purposes. If Luke had really wanted to teach us that the signs and wonders ministry, as well as the ministry of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, were distinctively apostolic, wouldn't he have given more attention to miracles by the other apostles? Indeed, if that were his intention he would have suppressed the stories about Stephen and Philip and substituted apos-

Argument  
from  
silence



## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (3 of 13)

Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles? 233

statement about Acts were true, it is only an observation about healing in the book of Acts, not about the other miraculous phenomena or the rest of the New Testament, and the conclusion he draws from his interpretation of the evidence in Acts is contradicted by the rest of the New Testament.

## II. A SURVEY OF SIGNS, WONDERS, & MIRACLES

The following is a brief survey of both the occurrences of signs and wonders in the New Testament and the occurrences of miraculous gifts of the Spirit. Remember that the reason Warfield and others want to argue that supernatural gifts are only given to the few is that they see their purpose as authenticating the apostles. Every example of these gifts given outside the circle of the apostles, therefore, challenges the theory that the gifts were only given to the few and for the authentication of the apostles.

A. In Luke 10:9 Jesus grants authority to the seventy-two to heal the sick in their preaching mission. In verse seventeen they return full of joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." Jesus acknowledges in verses nineteen and twenty that he had given them special power over demonic forces. Just for the sake of argument, I am willing to grant that this may have been a temporary mission and a temporary empowering. But this is still a tremendous exception to the theory that only a few received miraculous gifts, and then only for the purpose of authenticating the apostles. Why did Jesus ever give the seventy-two authority to heal the sick and cast out demons if he intended only a few to do miracles and only for the purpose of authenticating the apostles?

B. There was also the anonymous man who was the subject of the interchange between John and Jesus in Mark 9:38-39:

"Teacher," said John, "we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us." "Do not stop him," Jesus said. "No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me."

This is an extremely interesting case. Here we have an anonymous man in the Gospels who was doing something that only Jesus and the apostles thus far had been empowered to do—driving out demons. Yet neither Jesus nor the apostles had laid hands on this man and recognized him as an official member of the apostolic band. Why does Mark include this story? What is he trying to tell us? This certainly is a signif-

232 Surprised by the Power of the Spirit

1:8). The fact that only a few possess or do certain things, therefore, is irrelevant *in itself* to determine whether such things were meant to be temporary or permanent in the life of the church.

Scripture presents the lives of special people to Christian readers as examples to copy (see Heb. 11:4-12:3; 1 Cor. 4:16-17; 11:1; Phil. 3:17; 4:9; and 1 Thess. 1:6). Modern interpreters, however, who have no experience of the miraculous, assume an antisupernatural method of interpretation at this point. They read the stories of the apostles, Stephen, Philip, Agabus, and others in the book of Acts and assume that the divine guidance and miracles associated with their lives are not to be copied or even hoped for in modern Christian experience. On a theoretical level this assumption may or may not be true, but in order for it to carry conviction it needs to be based on clear statements of Scripture, not simply on the observation that only a few people did miracles in the New Testament.

In the book of Acts only five people are mentioned by name as doing signs and wonders: Peter, Paul, Barnabas, Stephen, and Philip. Should we conclude from this that these were the only five to do signs and wonders? No, because we are told the other apostles also did signs and wonders, even though they are not mentioned by name (Acts 2:43; 5:12). Is it fair to draw the conclusion that only the apostles did signs and wonders? No, because we have the examples of Stephen and Philip to contradict this conclusion, and more importantly, we lack a specific statement in Acts or anywhere else that the ministry of signs and wonders is limited to the apostles. Or to put it another way, historical examples, such as those found in narrative literature, must be interpreted by clear statements from Scripture itself, not from our own experience or what seems logical to us as readers.

When we look at the Scriptures, we will find that Warfield's assertion that only a few received supernatural gifts is completely false. Masters was more careful in his assertion. He said that

every example of healing (by the instrumentality of a person) in the Book of Acts is performed by an apostle, or an apostle's deputy, and if we go strictly by the biblical record the only three "deputies" who had any involvement in healing were Stephen, Philip and possibly Barnabas. Acts 14:3 includes him.<sup>7</sup> (author's emphasis)

Masters limits his argument to the specific examples of healing in Acts. Depending on how we view Ananias' ministry in Acts chapter 9, Masters' statement is open to question, for Ananias was used to heal Paul's divinely caused blindness (Acts 9:17-18). But even if Masters

## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (4 of 13)

## 234 Surprised by the Power of the Spirit

icant exception to the theory that only the apostles and their followers did miracles and only for the purpose of authenticating apostolic ministry. Thus even in the Gospels the ministry of the miraculous is not limited to the twelve apostles nor distinctively for their authentication.

C. When we turn to the book of Acts, we discover that many people exercise various miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. For example, there are many people who speak in tongues:

1. The one hundred twenty (Acts 2)
2. The Samaritans (They almost certainly spoke in tongues, for Acts 8:18 says that Simon "saw" the Samaritans receiving the Holy Spirit.)
3. Cornelius and the Gentiles with him (Acts 10:45-46)
4. The twelve disciples at Ephesus (Acts 19:6)

D. There are also a number of people mentioned in Acts who had received the gift of prophecy:

1. The prophet Agabus (Acts 11:28; 21:10-11)
2. The individuals in Acts 13:1
3. The prophets Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32)
4. The disciples at Tyre who "through the Spirit . . . urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem" (Acts 21:4)
5. Philip's four unmarried daughters who prophesied (Acts 21:9)
6. Ananias (Acts 9:10-18)

When Stephen and Philip are added to the list just mentioned, there is an impressive variety of nonapostolic figures receiving and exercising miraculous charismata in a book that is almost exclusively devoted to the ministries of Peter and Paul.

E. Ananias is one of the more interesting examples of a nonapostolic character who has a miraculous ministry. His relative obscurity makes him all the more interesting. The only thing we know about him is that he was "a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there" (Acts 22:12).

In Ananias's ministry to Saul, he exercised both a healing gift and a prophetic gift (Acts 9:10-18). But more than this, it was at the hands of Ananias that Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17). God used Ananias, a nonapostolic individual, to confer the Holy Spirit on an apostle! It is likely that the apostle Paul was given his "miracle-working powers" at this very instance, because he not only received the Holy Spirit at this time, but he was also to be filled with the Holy Spirit when Ananias laid hands on him (Acts 9:17).<sup>8</sup>

In the book of Acts we find so many exceptions to the idea that only a few received supernatural gifts and that the supernatural gifts

## Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles? 235

were exclusively for the authentication of the apostles that we are forced to abandon this theory.

Masters wants to draw a conclusion about healing based on his observation that only the apostles and three others are presented as healing in the book of Acts. However, his conclusion is not justified. First, he limits his examples to only the miraculous gift of healing, and even here Ananias (Acts 9:10-18) is an exception to his observation, for Ananias is used to heal Paul.<sup>9</sup> But more importantly, the book of Acts abounds in other miraculous charismata. I have already mentioned the examples of tongues and prophecy in the book of Acts that occur in people who are not apostles. If Masters wants to argue that the miraculous gifts have ceased because they were tied exclusively to the apostles, he cannot limit his conclusions to one gift. Nor can he limit his observations only to the book of Acts. When we examine the rest of the New Testament, we find that the evidence for miracles, healings, and the other miraculous gifts of the Spirit is significantly broader than the book of Acts.

All of the gifts of the Spirit were in operation at the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 12:7-10). Some have argued that 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 contains a summary of the gifts given to the whole church rather than gifts that were actually present in the Corinthian church. Their goal in asserting this is to suggest that only the apostles and a few others experienced the miraculous gifts. They would like us to believe that the average Corinthian Christian only had the nonmiraculous gifts. Paul specifically contradicts this suggestion when he tells the Corinthians that none of the spiritual gifts (*charismata*) were lacking among them (1 Cor. 1:7). The description in 1 Corinthians 14:26 where tongues and prophecy are present in the normal Corinthian worship service also contradicts this interpretation. The gift of prophecy was also in use in Rome (Rom. 12:6), Thessalonica (1 Thess. 5:20), and Ephesus (Eph. 4:11). The casual way in which Paul mentions miracles in Galatians 3:5 suggests that miracles were common among the Galatian churches.<sup>10</sup> "God works *miracles among you . . .*" (1 Cor. 12:9)

## III. THE ROLE OF THE APOSTLES IN CONFERRING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Warfield argued that

only in the two initial instances of the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost and the reception of Cornelius are charismata recorded as conferred without the laying on of the hands of the apostles. There is no instance on record of their conference by laying on of the hands than anyone else than an apostle.<sup>11</sup>

## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (5 of 13)

236 *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit:*

It should be noted that this is not an argument based on a specific statement of Scripture about the impartation of the gifts of the Spirit. It is ultimately an argument from silence. Warfield has already noted a major exception to his theory, namely, the case of Cornelius. This is a significant exception because Peter was present. If it is truly necessary to receive spiritual gifts through the laying on of the hands of the apostles, why didn't Peter have to lay hands on Cornelius? Peter was present & miracles did this was a lay instrument of God.

There are other exceptions as well. Many people appear in the book of Acts who have the gift of prophecy, and yet there is no recorded instance of an apostle laying hands on them. I am referring to Agabus (Acts 11:28; 21:10-11), the individuals in Acts 13:1, the prophets Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32), and Philip's four unmarried daughters who prophesied (Acts 21:9). There is no evidence in the book of Acts that any of the apostles laid hands on the previously mentioned people in order for them to receive the miraculous charismata which they exercised. There is also the case of Ananias, who laid hands on an apostle that he might receive the Holy Spirit and be filled with the Spirit as mentioned previously.<sup>12</sup> Outside the book of Acts we find similar evidence. Timothy, for example, is an individual who received one of the charismata through the laying on of the elders hands (1 Tim. 4:14).<sup>13</sup>

Edward Gross formulates Warfield's argument in a slightly different way. He writes:

Both the direct statements and the implications of the Scriptures support the teaching that miraculous gifts were bestowed only through the agency of an apostle. The conclusion, then, is that when the apostles ceased living, the miraculous gifts ceased being conferred. The one was dependent upon the other.<sup>14</sup>

Whereas Warfield argued that the gifts were conferred only through the "laying on of the apostles hands," Gross substitutes "only through the agency of an apostle." In this way, Gross can claim that Cornelius and his friends received the gift of tongues through the "agency" of Peter even though Peter did not lay hands on them.

For Gross the most important text is Acts 8:5-19. This is the story of the Samaritans' conversion. Philip does great signs among the Samaritans and preaches Christ to them so that many are converted, but they do not receive the Holy Spirit at their conversion. This is the only place after Pentecost where someone clearly believes in the Lord Jesus and does not receive the Holy Spirit immediately on their belief. The Samaritans did not receive the Holy Spirit until Peter and John came down from Jerusalem and prayed for them. Why was there a delay in giving the Holy Spirit to the Samaritans?

237 *Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?*

Gross answers the question in the following way:

Philip was a miracle worker (Acts 7, 13). So why could he not confer these like signs upon the Samaritans through the prayer in Jesus name? The simple and obvious answer is: Philip was not an apostle. Philip could preach and perform miracles; but it was God's will that only the apostles could bestow miraculous gifts.<sup>15</sup>

Gross is right. The answer he gives is simple, but it is too simple. The question does not primarily concern the bestowal of miraculous gifts but the bestowal of the Holy Spirit.<sup>16</sup> Consider Professor Turner's evaluation of the position that Gross takes. He writes:

To say the Samaritans in Acts 8:14-17 "all receive the power of working signs by the laying on of Apostolic hands," and that this was paradigmatic, is sheer nonsense and needs to be labelled as such: it totally misses Luke's point. Laying on of hands indeed there was, and signs there were too—both at the same time and possibly later—but Luke is concerned to depict the Samaritan reception of the Spirit promised in Acts 2 (vv. 17-21, 33, 38ff.) to all; not a special charism for working apostolocentric authenticating signs!<sup>17</sup>

The answer to the delay in the Samaritans' reception of the Holy Spirit is more likely found in the history of the Samaritans. Throughout their history they refused to submit to the authority of the divinely chosen leaders of Israel. They even produced their own sectarian edition of the first five books of the Bible, and they refused to acknowledge the rest of the Old Testament. In short, they had always refused to submit to God's ordained leadership. By delaying the gift of the Spirit until the apostles could lay hands on them, God was once for all correcting this problem. The Samaritans would be taught from here on out that they must submit to the leadership of the apostles at Jerusalem. They had always refused to acknowledge the authority of Jerusalem and instead had substituted their own centers of worship. This problem was now corrected.

It was not simply miraculous gifts that were at issue. It was the giving of the Holy Spirit and submission to apostolic authority. The Acts 8:5-19 example is not only capable of another explanation than that given by Gross; it demands another explanation.

There are two other insurmountable obstacles to Gross's theory that the "miraculous gifts were bestowed only through the agency of an apostle." The church at Rome had not been founded by an apostle nor



## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (6 of 13)

238 Surprised by the Power of the Spirit

ever visited by an apostle as far as the biblical record is concerned. In spite of the lack of apostolic presence, however, the church at Rome had the gift of prophecy functioning there (Rom. 12:6-8). If the miraculous gifts can only be given through the agency of an apostle, how did Rome get it? All Gross can say about the presence of prophecy at Rome is, "This could have been conferred by the apostles on the Roman leaders while they were still in Jerusalem, shortly after their conversion to Christianity."<sup>18</sup>

We can always suggest an explanation of this sort when the facts contradict our theory. It is also possible, for example, that Peter could have visited Rome, and the Scriptures are simply silent about his visit. Gross's explanation of how the gift of prophecy came to the church at Rome is not really an explanation. It is an *explaining away* of an example that overturns his theory. You cannot base your theology on what "could have been" nor on arguments from silence. If you are content to base your theology on examples rather than clear statements of the Scripture, then you must accept counter examples as well.

Gross argues that "the direct statements . . . of the Scripture" support his theory. Yet he never produces one simple direct statement from Scripture that teaches that the miraculous gifts were bestowed only through "the agency of an apostle." In fact, there is no clear statement in Scripture that teaches the spiritual gifts could only be given through the agency of an apostle. In the church at Rome we have a clear exception to such a rule—an exception of such magnitude that it undermines the rule altogether. Nor is the church at Rome the only exception. Another clear exception to Gross's rule is found in 1 Timothy 4:14. Paul writes, "Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you." Timothy was given a *charisma* through the supernatural gift of prophecy and the laying on of elders' hands, not the laying on of Paul's hands. At another time, Timothy received a gift through the laying on of Paul's hands (2 Tim. 1:6). To allege that 1 Timothy 4:14 and 2 Timothy 1:6 refer to the same incident is unconvincing because there is no evidence for such an assertion. No, <sup>18</sup> *Timothy's letter says that Timothy received the laying on of hands while, not being*

And why is this not a reasonable explanation? (Deere gives no indication)

Actually, both sides of the issue argue from silence!

But the issue is miraculous gifts

## IV

## THE ALLEGED LOSS OF PAUL'S GIFT OF HEALING

Paul's failure to heal Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25-27). Timothy (1 Tim. 5:23), and Trophimus (2 Tim. 4:20) indicates to some people that his healing gift must have ceased before the end of his life.<sup>19</sup> Geisler thinks that this conclusion is warranted by other indications in Scripture. He thinks that the Scripture which deals with the "early period," A.D. 33-60, abounds in the miraculous, while the Scripture dealing with

Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles? 239

the "later period," A.D. 60-67, has no instances of tongues, healings, exorcisms, or raisings from the dead.<sup>20</sup> To illustrate his point Geisler offers this specific example: "The same apostle who exorcised a demon on command (Acts 15) [sic] could only hope for repentance that Hymenaeus and Philetus would 'escape from the trap of the devil' (2 Timothy 2:26)."<sup>21</sup>

First of all, the example of Hymenaeus cited by Geisler hardly means that Paul lost the ability to cast out a demon. Who seriously believes that the most eminent of all the apostles lost his authority to cast out demons before the end of his life? In the case of Hymenaeus, Paul had turned this man over to Satan for his blasphemous teaching (1 Tim. 1:20). The Scripture does not say anything about Paul attempting or even wanting to cast a demon out of Hymenaeus. And it was never the practice of New Testament apostles to cast demons out of heretics and false teachers. Their practice, and their advice to the church, was to avoid these kinds of people (Titus 2:9-11; 2 John 10-11). For Geisler's example to carry any conviction at all, he would have to show that Paul attempted to cast the demon out of Hymenaeus and could not do so. True. This leads us to the major problem, not only of this specific example, but of the whole argument concerning the lack of the supernatural in Paul's final epistles.

Geisler's argument carries no conviction at all because it is an argument from silence. Geisler argues that "from Ephesians to 2 Timothy we have no mention of tongues, healings, exorcisms, or raisings from the dead."<sup>22</sup> He concludes, therefore, that since these things are not mentioned, they must not be occurring during the period of these epistles (roughly A.D. 60-68).<sup>23</sup> For Geisler's argument to be believable, he would have to show that if these miraculous gifts were still in existence Paul would have had to mention them in these epistles.<sup>24</sup>

I could use Geisler's same methodology to "prove" that Paul had lost his gift of celibacy by A.D. 60-67. Paul referred to his celibacy as a charisma (1 Cor. 7:7), and it is evident that he highly valued this gift. Yet he does not mention it in his latter epistles (from Ephesians to 2 Timothy). Would I be justified in concluding that he no longer had the gift of celibacy? Of course not. I would have to prove first that he should have mentioned it if he still had it. Likewise, Paul does not mention from Ephesians to 2 Timothy any success that he has had during that time in personal evangelism. Should we therefore conclude that his evangelistic gift has ceased? I hope you can see by now the inability of an argument from silence to prove anything from Scripture.

But there is more wrong with Geisler's argument than just being an argument from silence. Ultimately, Geisler is comparing apples and oranges. He is contrasting narrative literature with didactic literature.

No, the NT is not silent on how to heal (see James 5:14 for the elder's instruction)

But the healing of Timothy here is obvious.

## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (7 of 13)

Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles? 241

By definition, these two kinds of literature deal with different themes. The book of Acts is composed of stories, while the Epistles deal with particular problems in individual churches. One of the purposes of the book of Acts is to show the continuing works of Jesus in his miraculous power ministry.<sup>25</sup> Of course the book of Acts is going to be filled with stories of miraculous deeds, while the Epistles will generally mention these things only when they are the source of a problem, as in Corinth.

Paul was in prison when he wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. That is why they are called the prison Epistles. Obviously, they are not going to be filled with narrative stories about his miracle-working ministry nor his evangelistic ministry—he is in prison! His last three letters at the end of his life to Timothy and Titus center on advice to these young men in shepherding the flock under their charge. He is not writing to them narrative stories about his exploits. Why should we expect him to tell Timothy and Titus about miracles in his own life which they had witnessed numerous times?

There is another problem with Geisler's observation about the later portions of Scripture. He fails to mention that the most graphic visions and explicit prophetic revelation do not come in the book of Acts. They come some thirty years after Paul's death. I am referring to the visions and prophecies that were given to the apostle John around A.D. 95, which were recorded in the book of Revelation. The revelatory charisma, therefore, were still functioning in great strength thirty years after Geisler says they ceased.<sup>26</sup>

Yet there were three close associates of an apostle famous for his healing gift who did not get healed. How are we to account for this? First of all, it is impossible to account for the lack of healing of these three men by the loss of Paul's healing gift. Why? Because no one can give a *scriptural* reason why Paul should have lost his gift of healing six or seven years before the end of his life.

Why would God have withdrawn Paul's healing gift? No cessationist can give a consistent reason for this withdrawal. The cessationist believes that the healing gifts authenticated the apostles and their ministry, especially their ministry of writing Scripture. On this theory, does Paul no longer need divine authentication? This would mean that the letters written at the end of his life do not have the same miraculous authentication that the other letters had. And what of his evangelistic ministry? Does he no longer require divine authentication for his evangelistic ministry during the years after his release from his first Roman imprisonment (A.D. 63-65)? In reality, wouldn't the withdrawal of Paul's healing gift show that God was lifting his approval, since according to the cessationist theory the miraculous gifts were meant to show God's divine approval of the apostles? No, God approves of His servants today who don't perform miracles.

There is yet another inconsistency in Geisler's theory. Why did God leave Paul's prophetic gift and his revelatory gift (for writing Scripture) and take away his healing gift? He is still making prophetic statements in his last letter (see 2 Tim. 4:6-8 where Paul prophesies his death and future reward; see also his prophetic statement about Alexander in 4:14). Why would God withdraw healing and miracles but leave the prophetic and revelatory gifts?<sup>27</sup> Did He?

I don't know, but who does? God is sovereign.

It is far simpler to believe that the apostle Paul prayed for these three men and God simply said, "No." Since it has already been demonstrated that neither Jesus nor the apostles could heal at will, why not simply assume that God, for his own sovereign purposes, chose not to heal these three men through Paul's healing gift? This is much easier to believe than the theory that by A.D. 60, seven to eight years before the end of his life, God had withdrawn the healing gift of the most eminent of his apostles.

## DO THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT APOSTLESHIP HAS CEASED?

Most cessationists assume that apostleship is one of the charismata. Then they attempt to prove from Scripture that apostleship has ceased and consequently draw the conclusion that at least one spiritual gift was temporary. This conclusion admits to the possibility of other gifts being temporary.

Others, as we have seen, go beyond this conclusion and view the passing of the apostles as *necessarily* demanding that the miraculous spiritual gifts have ceased. They claim the miraculous gifts were given only to the apostles and their close associates, they were capable of being imparted only by the apostles, and they were only for the distinct purpose of authenticating the apostles.

The passing of the apostles, however, (assuming for the sake of argument that they have ceased) may have little relevance to the question of whether or not the miraculous gifts of the Spirit have ceased. In reality, there are many people who believe that the gifts of the Spirit are presently being given, even though they also think that Scripture teaches that apostles ceased at the end of the first century.<sup>28</sup> They, as well as others, become nervous when the conversation turns to the possibility of present-day apostles.

Their concern revolves around two issues: apostles wrote Scripture, and they had an authority so great that to disobey them was equal to disobeying God. No one—at least no one that I know—wants to open up the possibility of someone adding to the Scriptures. I certainly don't. And it is difficult to imagine anyone in the contemporary church

Jack Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* (7 of 13)

V.

? No, the presence of prophecy in Acts doesn't argue for miracles and healing then.

Surprised by the Power of the Spirit 240

Epistles note problems, but not all problems!

But if miracles are so important, why aren't they mentioned?

The issue is miracles in the 60s, let earlier

No, Deere continues miracles with Revelation

No, the issue is whether continual authentication is needed.

## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (8 of 13)

Jack Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* (8 of 13)

Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles? 243

## Who Were the New Testament Apostles?

The first people to be called apostles in the New Testament were the original twelve disciples of Jesus (Matt. 10:2). When Judas defected from this group by betraying Jesus, Matthias was taken by lot to fill Judas' place (Acts 1:21-26). This group of twelve is unique and could not be expanded beyond the twelve. The original twelve were specifically called and appointed for this task by the Lord himself during his earthly ministry (Mark 3:13ff.). Even Matthias was divinely chosen by the Lord (cf. Acts 1:24). The requirement for membership in the original twelve was to have been with Jesus since the baptism of John and to have been an eye witness of his resurrection (Acts 1:21ff.). The names of these twelve are inscribed on the twelve foundation stones of the wall of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:14). These twelve, therefore, make up a closed circle to which no new additions were possible after the inclusion of Matthias.

There were, however, other apostles, but they were never counted as part of "the Twelve." It is clear that the New Testament viewed both Paul and Barnabas as apostles (Acts 14:4, 14). James, the Lord's brother, is clearly called an apostle by Paul (Gal. 1:19, <sup>31</sup> cf. 1 Cor. 15:7), and James also appears, along with Peter, as one of the major leaders of the church at Jerusalem during the council at Jerusalem (Acts 15:13-19).

Are there other apostles? It is possible that Paul also refers to Silas as an apostle (1 Thess. 2:7). <sup>32</sup> Romans 16:7 may also indicate that Andronicus and Junias were apostles, but there are a number of interpretive difficulties with this passage that keep us from being certain about its meaning. Finally, the phrase "all the apostles" in 1 Corinthians 15:7 may refer to an unspecified number of apostles in addition to "the Twelve" already mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:5.<sup>33</sup>

To summarize all of this, the New Testament clearly teaches that there were fifteen apostles: the Twelve plus Paul, Barnabas, and James. Very likely Silas was a sixteenth apostle. Perhaps Andronicus, Junias, and some other unnamed apostles (1 Cor. 15:7) ought to be added to this list. The fact that there were false apostles (2 Cor. 11:13) indicates that the number of apostles could not have been fixed in New Testament times, or else there would be no possibility for these men to masquerade as apostles.<sup>34</sup>

four argument.  
False apostles  
only argues for  
the existence  
of true ones -  
not that there  
must be more  
than 15!

## B. The Requirements for Apostleship in the New Testament

Under this section I am not discussing the requirements for membership in "the Twelve." We have already seen that this was a unique circle which would not admit any additions beyond Matthias. Here we

Surprised by the Power of the Spirit 242

who has the character to bear the authority that was given to the apostles. Do you know a church leader who does all things for the sake of the gospel (1 Cor. 9:23)? Or a leader for whom living simply means Christ (Phil. 1:21)? These kinds of issues naturally make us reticent to identify anyone today as an apostle in the same sense that Paul and the Twelve were apostles. Before we draw a hasty conclusion, however, there are a number of issues we must consider.

## A. Is Apostleship a Spiritual Gift?

Many writers assume that apostleship is a spiritual gift. But that assumption has not been proven. Paul himself does not call apostleship a spiritual gift, either in 1 Corinthians 12 or in Ephesians 4:11. What I mean is that he never applies the term *charisma* to apostleship, nor does he speak of apostleship in the same way he speaks of the other spiritual gifts.<sup>29</sup> If apostleship is not a spiritual gift in the same sense that healing or miracles are spiritual gifts, what is it then?

Apostles were not mentioned in the list of miraculous charismata in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. Paul does not mention apostles until his concluding list beginning at 1 Corinthians 12:28. Fee remarks, "It is no surprise that Paul should list 'apostles' first. The surprise is that they should be on this list at all, and that he should list them in the plural."<sup>30</sup> An apostle can hardly be thought of as a "spiritual gift" like healing, miracles, teaching, and so on. Technically, however, the list beginning in verse 28 is not only a list of spiritual gifts. The first three items are not gifts but persons who represent ministries—apostles, prophets, and teachers. The remaining items are gifts—miracles, gifts of healing, helps, administrations, and tongues. The mixture in this list of persons and spiritual gifts was probably intended to indicate that the wide diversity in the body—from apostles to the gift of tongues and everything in between—has been appointed by God, and therefore, empowered by him. Strictly speaking, Paul has not called apostles "spiritual gifts."

It is virtually impossible to define the "gift" of apostleship in the same way that the other gifts can be defined. We can easily conceive of someone exercising the gift of prophecy without being a prophet. The same is true for all the other gifts. But how could someone come to a meeting of a local assembly and exercise the gift of apostleship in that meeting without actually being an apostle? An apostle in an assembly might teach, or prophesy, or heal, or lead, or administrate. But what would it mean to exercise the gift of apostleship? We simply cannot think of apostleship apart from the historical apostles. In the New Testament an apostle is not a spiritual gift but a person who has a divinely given commission and ministry. But why can't the apostles be the only ones with the gift of apostleship?

No, they are all given to people.

Really? But we have much more info in the NT on apostles than the others!

## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (9 of 13)

## 244 Surprised by the Power of the Spirit

are concerned with those who became apostles after the Twelve. Even though the Twelve have a unique place in the history of redemption, the New Testament does not teach that this second group of apostles had any less authority than the Twelve. The requirements, however, for membership in this second group of apostles are slightly different than in the original twelve, because these men were not with the Lord Jesus from the beginning of his ministry, starting with the baptism of John.

In what follows we are basically dependent on Paul's description of his own apostleship. Paul set forth the *requirements* and *characteristics* of apostleship. We must be careful not to confuse these two. On the one hand, many people may share certain characteristics with the apostles, but that would not make them apostles. The apostles do signs and wonders (Acts 2:43), for example, but so do Stephen and Philip (Acts 6:8; 8:6), who are not considered apostles.

If we confuse the requirements of apostleship with the characteristics of apostleship, we could multiply the list of requirements indefinitely. We might also end up excluding some true apostles from the list. For instance, if we say that writing Scripture is a requirement for apostleship, then we would have to exclude all those apostles who did not write Scripture.

Paul sets forth three requirements for apostleship. The first and most important requirement is the specific call and commission from the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:1; Rom. 1:1, 5; 1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1). The other two requirements are set forth in 1 Corinthians 9:1-2:

①

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord? Even though I may not be an apostle to others, surely I am to you! For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

The second requirement that Paul very clearly sets forth is that an apostle must have seen the Lord Jesus Christ. In Paul's case this requirement was met on the Damascus road when he saw the risen Christ (Acts 9:1-9). The third requirement is perhaps not really a requirement but rather a characteristic or proof of apostleship. Here I am speaking of his appeal to the Corinthians that they are the seal of his apostleship. In other words, Paul is appealing to his effectiveness in ministry, specifically in planting churches.

②

It is at once apparent that the only unique requirement of apostleship is the personal call and commission of the Lord Jesus Christ. Others had seen the risen Lord (1 Corinthians 15:6 mentions more than five hundred who had seen the risen Lord), but this did not make them apostles. Likewise, others were effective in ministry and even in planting churches (cf. Philip's ministry in Samaria), but this did not make

No, being "seal" means "proof" or "evidence" (2 Cor. 12:18) was also a requirement to be an apostle. (There isn't this a "characteristic" on 1 Cor. 1:24)

## Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?

245

them apostles. The foundation then of apostleship is the personal call and commission of the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>35</sup>

## C. The Characteristics of New Testament Apostleship

There are five characteristics which Paul stresses so commonly in his writings that we would have to list them as definite characteristics of an apostle. Others may share these characteristics, however, without being an apostle, but it would be difficult to imagine any apostle who did not have these characteristics.

① First on this list is the suffering of an apostle. The most important texts here are 1 Corinthians 4:9-13; 2 Corinthians 4:7-12; 6:3-10; 11:23-33; and Galatians 6:17. The theological purpose behind this suffering is given in 2 Corinthians 4:7:

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

The suffering of the apostles, then, is not accidental but divinely intended. God publicly displayed their weakness by allowing them to suffer and be persecuted. He allowed them to be misunderstood and to appear as unprotected (they go hungry, cold, and naked), so that no one would put their confidence in the "jars of clay" but rather in the power of God to use those earthen vessels. Time and time again the Lord displays the apostles as mere men and as weak men (2 Corinthians 12:9-10) so that glory may be given to God for the surpassing greatness of his power and not to men for the greatness of their power. According to the New Testament, it is impossible to conceive of an apostle who was not intimately acquainted with suffering and persecution.

Today there are those in the church who are claiming to be apostles, but they seem to want no part of apostolic suffering. They not only live lifestyles of lavish ease, but they accept and encourage an incredible deference that is paid to them by ordinary Christians in the body of Christ. They effectively put themselves beyond the rebuke of fellow Christians, as though this were part of their apostolic calling. They also teach that God wants Christians to live lives of wealth and comfort with little, if any, experience of suffering.

②

A second characteristic is the special insight into divine mysteries given to the apostles. They have divine insight into the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3:1-6), into the mystery of godliness (1 Tim. 3:16), into the mystery of Israel's conversion (Rom. 11:25-32), and Paul had even seen visions and heard revelations which he was not permitted to speak on earth (2 Cor. 12:1-4, 7). Insight into divine mysteries, however, is not



## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (10 of 13)

Jack Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* (10 of 13)

246 *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* 247

unique to the apostles. Prophets also have insight into divine mysteries (Eph 3:5).<sup>36</sup>

③ A third characteristic of apostolic ministry is the presence of signs and wonders as they proclaim the Lord Jesus. Jesus promised the apostles that they would be clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). This was fulfilled in the Twelve (Acts 2:43; 5:12) and in the ministry of the apostles who came after the Twelve (note the miracles done through Barnabas and Paul in Acts 14:3 and 15:12 and through Paul alone in Romans 15:19 and 2 Corinthians 12:12). Again, although this is a characteristic of apostolic ministry, it is not uniquely apostolic, because Stephen and Philip did signs and wonders also.

④ A fourth characteristic is the blameless integrity of the apostles (1 Cor. 1:12; 2:17; 4:2; 7:2). Others, of course, may have blameless integrity without being an apostle, but who could imagine an apostle who was not blameless in his integrity? the apostles had Deere says about Peter on p. 249

⑤ The last characteristic is apostolic authority. The Twelve were given authority over demons and all diseases (Matt. 10:1; Mark 3:15; 6:7; Luke 9:1). This authority was not unique to the apostles alone, however; it was also given to the seventy when Jesus sent them out (Luke 10:19). And the anonymous man mentioned in Mark 9:38-41 apparently had authority over demons.

Sometimes the nature of apostolic authority is misunderstood. It is not uncommon for people to view this authority as primarily authority over believers to direct their lives and make decisions for them. When authority is mentioned in the New Testament in connection with the apostles, it is primarily authority over the ant kingdom forces. It is, of course, true that Ananias and Sapphira dropped dead while Peter was exposing their sin (Acts 5:1-11). But did Peter really have the authority to kill sinning believers? I don't think so. I think it is more likely that God showed him the sin of these two and what he intended to do to them.

Paul also had an authority to impart spiritual gifts. He reminded Timothy to stir up the gift that was in him through the laying on of Paul's hands (2 Tim. 1:6; cf. Rom. 1:11). Yet even this is not uniquely apostolic, for the elders also have power to impart spiritual gifts (1 Tim. 4:14).

Paul claimed that he was given authority to build up rather than tear down (2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10). The idea of building up probably refers to the foundational role the apostles had in establishing the first-century church (Eph. 2:20). It was clearly Paul's intention to emphasize the positive aspect of his authority—the authority to build up. But the reference to "pulling you down" was not simply an idle threat or a figure of speech. Paul had the authority to deliver church members over to Satan

in particular instances (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:20). Paul warned the Corinthians that if they did not change their attitude he would have to come to them "with a whip" (1 Cor. 4:18-21). There is an ominous tone in these words. Paul was clearly claiming a divine power to bring judgment on the Corinthian church if they did not repent.

Is this kind of authority unique to the apostles? I do not think so because the Scripture does not say that it is unique to the apostles. Conceivably God could use someone today to give a prophetic word of judgment to an individual, to a church, a city, or a nation. I actually know of several cases where Christians have been warned to repent or their lives would be taken. I know of two instances where lives were taken just as the prophetic word said they would be.

Some would perhaps object that I have not listed the ability to write Scripture as part of apostolic authority. The reason I have not listed it is that not all apostles wrote Scripture. In reality, only three of the original twelve apostles wrote Scripture—Matthew, John, and Peter. And some who were not apostles wrote Scripture. In fact, we do not even know who wrote the book of Hebrews, yet it is still Scripture. This is not to say that I believe someone can write Scripture again today. I do not think anyone has that ability today. I think that our Bible, the Old and New Testament, is complete and sufficient and that it will never have any additions. It is also my personal conviction that the Bible, both the Old and New Testament, is the inerrant Word of God. We do not, however, safeguard the Bible from any further additions by claiming that there are no more apostles, since apostolic authorship was clearly not divinely intended as a test for canonicity.

### Arguments That the Apostolic Office Has Ceased

MacArthur lists six reasons why the apostolic office has ceased:

1. The church was founded upon the apostles.
2. Apostles were eyewitnesses to the resurrection.
3. Apostles were chosen personally by Jesus Christ.
4. Apostles were authenticated by miraculous signs.
5. Apostles had absolute authority.
6. Apostles have an eternal and unique place of honor.<sup>37</sup>

The first thing to notice about these arguments is that neither MacArthur, nor anyone else, can produce a specific text of Scripture that says the apostolic office has ceased or would cease during the church age. All of these arguments are based on theological deductions, not on specific statements of Scripture. None of these arguments, nor the passages used to support these arguments, teach that the Lord could not

But people are not as authentic as Scripture (Lukes are called the real apostles at different "levels of induction". Indeed, Graham does not like - see pp. 80-93, 124-38, 24-36 of *Heb. 10:13*)

④ But Peter did not act with integrity in Gal. 2

## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (11 of 13)

Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles? 249

give additional apostles to the church after Paul, Barnabas, and perhaps others in the first century.

- ① Reply to number 1: The fact that the apostles had a foundational role in the establishing of the church (Eph. 2:20) does not mean that the Lord could not, or would not, give more apostles. Someone had to found the church. Would we argue that just because they founded the church their ministry must be temporary? The founding director of a company or corporation will always be unique in the sense that he or she was the founder, but that does not mean the company would not have future directors or presidents.

On the other hand, Ephesians 4:11-13 may indicate that God intended apostles to continue until the return of Jesus. Five ministries—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers—were given to the church (v. 11). Why? Paul says that these ministries were given to equip the believers so that the believers can do the work of the ministry (v. 12). How long is this arrangement supposed to continue? Paul answers this question in verse 13:

Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. 4:13, emphasis mine)

The only reference in Paul's writings that I have found that specifically mentions the "duration" of the apostles' ministry is the "until" of Ephesians 4:13. If taken literally this would mean that the church will have apostles present until it reaches the maturity described in verse 13.

I know, however, that there are other interpretations of Ephesians 4:11-13. I plan to discuss them and Ephesians 2:20 in detail in my next book. My present point is simply this: we do not have a specific statement from Scripture to the effect that there would only be "one" generation of apostles. We do, however, have a specific statement that says we will have apostles at least until the church comes to maturity. At present it is difficult to view the church as having reached the level of maturity described in verse 13.

- ② Reply to number 2: It is true that an apostle had to be an eyewitness of the resurrection. In Paul's case this was fulfilled after Jesus had ascended into heaven. The Lord appeared to Paul on the Damascus road (Acts 9:1-9). Later, in Paul's testimony, he refers to this as "the vision from heaven" (Acts 26:19). Elsewhere, Luke uses this word for angelic visions (Luke 1:22; 24:23). What is to prevent the Lord from appearing to others in this same fashion? I know of no scriptural reason why the Lord has not, or could not, appear to others in his church.

- ③ Reply to number 3: What is to prevent the Lord from personally choosing and commissioning others to be apostles? He did this to Paul,

James, Barnabas, and most likely Silas. Why couldn't he do that today? MacArthur writes, "When the pastoral epistles set forth principles for lasting church leadership, they speak of elders and deacons. They never mention apostles."<sup>38</sup> Again, this is an argument from silence. Why should the pastoral epistles have mentioned apostleship? Elders, deacons, and apostles existed side by side in the New Testament church. The church needed rules governing the selection of elders and deacons, because Jesus had left their selection to his church. On the other hand, the church never chose its apostles. Jesus himself did that personally. Why then would he write Timothy or Titus and give them rules for choosing or electing apostles?

- ④ Reply to number 4: I have already shown that apostles were not authenticated by signs and wonders. To be sure, they did signs and wonders, but these signs and wonders did not authenticate them; rather the signs and wonders authenticated the Lord Jesus and the message about him. There is no scriptural reason, certainly no specific text, that would prevent Jesus from granting an outpouring of signs and wonders to his church in this century or any other century for that matter. And as we have seen, the ministry of signs and wonders is not a unique characteristic of the apostolic office. Others also do signs and wonders.

- ⑤ Reply to number 5: I do not think MacArthur, or others, are correct when they say apostles had "absolute authority."<sup>39</sup> This simply is "When the apostles spoke, there was no discussion." MacArthur writes, "Peter's hypocrisy was so great at Antioch that even Barnabas was carried away by it, along with a number of other Jewish Christians, so that Paul had to oppose Peter before the whole group (Gal. 2:11-21). On another occasion, Paul and Barnabas could not convince Jewish believers from Judea that circumcision was unnecessary. It took a church council at Jerusalem to settle the issue (Acts 15:1-35)."

There is a tendency among some protestant writers to almost defy the apostles. Gross maintains that an apostle "taught nothing contradictory to the Word of God (Galatians 1:8, 9),<sup>40</sup> But Peter did teach something contrary to the Word. Paul said that when Peter came to Antioch, his example led a number of people into hypocrisy. This was certainly a form of teaching, and Paul had to oppose it. I do not believe the apostles ever made a mistake writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but they did not live under constant inspiration of the Holy Spirit. As Peter's example shows, they were capable of significant sin, just like any other believer in the church.

The doctrine of inspiration only extends to the portion of the written Word of God that was given to each of the apostles. The doctrine of inspiration does not extend to their other interpretations or opinions. In my opinion, MacArthur, Gross, and others have gone significantly be-

## Spiritual Gifts: Readings

Jack Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* (11 of 13)

104

Rick Griffith, PhD

Because apostles were first in leadership (1 Cor 12:28)

It is also an argument from silence to assume God does apostles for these duties.

No, the issue with Peter was not teaching after but rather an error in behavior.

Really? So how many times do we lay a foundation?

But parallel - the same is the case to founders, not directors. The limited number of founders.

But who says the apostles are not still equipping the church now? Their writings are taught daily to equip believers.

OK, so where are they today? Who are they?

But who has seen Christ lately?

## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (12 of 13)

## 250 Surprised by the Power of the Spirit

yond what the Bible says about the authority of the apostles. They have done this, I am sure, in order to preserve the uniqueness of the apostles and ultimately the unique authority of the Word. But we do not protect or honor the Word when we go beyond what it says and claim for it something it does not claim for itself.

I might also point out that the Scriptures do teach that before Christ returns the Lord will commission two witnesses who will have greater power and authority than the apostles ever enjoyed. I am referring to Revelation 11:3-6:

"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies. This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die. These men have power to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want.

These two men are called "witnesses" like the apostles (Acts 1:8). They also prophesy. They will enjoy a protection and an authority that not even the apostles enjoyed: they will be able to kill anyone who wishes to harm them. And they will have a greater signs and wonders ministry than any Old Testament prophet or any New Testament apostle. Yet neither their ability to prophesy, their authority, nor their signs and wonders ministry will in any way endanger the unique authority of the canon of Scripture. This demonstrates that God could give apostles at any time in history (or those with more power and authority than the apostles) without doing violence to his Word or the gospel.

I find it ironic that some who are most insistent on the cessation of the apostles have, in fact, their own modern apostles. Just to cite one example, I recently spent several hours discussing theological differences with a man who is completely committed to Reformed theology. He was most concerned about my belief that God still speaks to us today; that he will give us dreams, visions, words of knowledge, guidance, warnings, and so on. He sees this as endangering the unique authority of the Bible. He sees it as contradicting the Reformation's cry of *sola Scriptura* and the Reformation's doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture.

When we were discussing our differences on this point, I was citing Scripture as my reason for believing that God still speaks. Rather than interact with me on a scriptural basis, he continually cited theological information period. This was true for most of our

## 251 Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?

discussion. In fact, I don't think it would be an overstatement to say that this man was more at home in the writings of Calvin and Calvinists than he was in the literature of the Bible.

It was apparent as I listened to him talk that he had more practical confidence in Calvin's interpretation of the Bible than in the actual writings of Paul. On a practical level, Calvin was a greater authority for him than even the apostle Paul. On a theoretical level he would never admit this, and he would be highly offended at my even suggesting it. Yet I cannot help believing that on a practical level it really is true.

This case is not unusual. I find that others are also more confident in citing their theological traditions rather than citing and arguing from specific texts of Scripture. In effect, this makes the originators of those traditions, whether they be Calvin, Luther, or someone else, equal if not greater in authority than the apostolic writers of Scripture. Calvin may not be an apostle to some, but I can certainly show you people to whom he is the apostle.

⑥ Reply to number 6: MacArthur's argument that "apostles have an eternal and unique place of honor" is supported by Revelation 21:14, which says that the names of the twelve apostles are inscribed on the twelve foundations stones of the wall of the new city. But the argument does not take into consideration Paul, Barnabas, or other potential New Testament apostles after the Twelve. Everyone admits that the Twelve have a unique place in the history of salvation. That is not at issue. But after the Twelve, God saw fit to add at least three others and possibly more. If he could add three or four others during the lifetime of the Twelve, why couldn't he add others after the first century? The Scriptures do not teach that apostles have ceased. Because they would be part of the church's foundation (Eph. 2:20)

I believe that the twelve apostles were unique and formed a closed circle. However, the addition of Paul, Barnabas, James, and possibly others opens the possibility of God giving additional apostles at any time in history. No specific text of Scripture prevents Jesus from appearing to and commissioning others in an apostolic office. In the future, he is going to give two witnesses to the church who will have even greater power than the first-century apostles (Rev. 11:3-6), and this will not endanger the authority of the Scripture. If at the end of church history the Lord is going to give two witnesses to the church who will be greater in authority and power than the New Testament apostles, why couldn't he give more apostles to the church before the time of the two witnesses?

I do not know of anyone today whom I would want to call an apostle in the same sense that I would call Paul an apostle. I am not willing to say why not?

This is a "show man" tactic. It lumps all cessationists into a "today over Bible" position.

But the issue at hand is the cessation of the gift of apostleship today. Today for future witnesses rather than for apostles today in the past, or in the future.

were not talking about what God can do

No, at one point they - and not apostles, but future witnesses.

This is quite a confession

Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (13 of 13)

## Appendix C

### Were There Only Three Periods of Miracles?

Deere says "No" and I agree "U"

252 Surprised by the Power of the Spirit

ing, however, to rule out this possibility, because I do not think the Scriptures rule it out.

Even if apostles have ceased, that would prove nothing in regard to the ministry of signs and wonders or of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. This is true because neither signs and wonders nor the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were limited to the apostles. Neither by *example* nor *statement* of Scripture can anyone prove that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were limited to the few. Just the converse is true. The attempt to prove that miraculous gifts were *exclusively* imparted through the apostles has no scriptural basis, but rather is an illusion birthed by theological prejudice. Perhaps, the worst example of this kind of prejudice is seen in the attempt to prove that the apostle Paul lost his gift of healing around A.D. 60, a full seven or eight years before the completion of his ministry.

The attempt, therefore, to connect the alleged cessation of the gifts with the passing of the apostles is futile on both levels of the argument.

On the one hand, it cannot be proved scripturally that apostles have ceased, and on the other hand, it cannot be proved that signs and wonders or the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were *exclusively* connected to the apostles. *This second argument is that*

I disagree - based on Eph. 2:20 (which does not say even though this is the way that the cessation of apostles.)

John MacArthur is a modern-day proponent of the view that there were only three periods of miracles in the biblical record. He formulates the argument in the following way:

Most biblical miracles happened in three relatively brief periods of Bible history: in the days of Moses and Joshua, during the ministries of Elijah and Elisha, and in the time of Christ and the apostles. . . .

Aside from those three intervals, the only supernatural events recorded in Scripture were isolated incidents. In the days of Isaiah, for example, the Lord supernaturally defeated Sennacherib's army (2 Kings 19:35-36), then healed Hezekiah and turned the sun's shadows back (20:1-11). In the days of Daniel God preserved Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the furnace (Daniel 3:20-26). For the most part, however, supernatural events like those did not characterize God's dealings with his people. . . . All three periods of miracles were times when God gave his written revelation—Scripture—in substantial quantities. Those doing the miracles were essentially the same ones heralding an era of revelation. Moses wrote the first five books of Scripture. Elijah and Elisha introduced the prophetic age. The apostles wrote nearly all of the New Testament.<sup>1</sup>

There are a number of difficulties with this argument, and it seems that most cessationists no longer use it. The first difficulty is with the alleged purpose of three periods of miracles. The reason for each period



## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (Endnotes 1 of 3)

- 286 *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*
- and it is—how can one deny that the power to rule over the enemies of God, chief among whom is the Devil, is also essential to the kingdom of God. This view is echoed by Grundmann in TDNT 2:302, "The miracles of Jesus are part of the invading dominion of God which Jesus brings with His own person in proclamation and act. They are the dominion of God overcoming and expelling the sway of demons and Satan."
7. Max Turner has argued this same point: "It is more worrying that Warfield and those who relied on him, failed to perceive that, for the New Testament writers, the healings were not externally attesting signs, but part of the scope of the salvation announced (cf. section 4.2 above), which reached beyond the merely spiritual to the psychological and physical. The dawning of salvation, viewed holistically, was the beginning of the reversal of Satan's oppression (Lk. 4:18-21; 7:20f.; Acts 10:38 etc.). As such, the healings were still regarded as having legitimating function with respect to Jesus and to the apostles (around whom they clustered with especial intensity), but essentially the healings belonged as part of the firstfruits of the kingdom of God, and so as part of the message of salvation which the church announced. So, if there are sick in the church, James can expect (at least as a rule of thumb) that the elders prayer of faith will bring healing (Jas. 5:15). The relationship which healing sustains to the kerygma of the dawning kingdom of God suggests that the New Testament writers did not envisage the two ever being separated" ("Spiritual Gifts Then and Now," *Vox Evangelica* 15 [1985: 38]).
- 287 *Notes*
7. Masters, *The Healing Epidemic*, p. 69. I do not understand why Masters persists in calling Barnabas an apostle's "deputy" when the Scripture plainly calls him an apostle (Acts 14:14).
8. Luke uses the same Greek expression to describe Paul's being filled with the Holy Spirit and the apostles' being filled in Acts 2:4. Warfield protests that, "Acts 9:12-17 is no exception, as is sometimes said; Ananias worked a miracle on Paul but did not confer miracle-working powers. Paul's own power of miracle-working was original with him as an Apostle, and not conferred by anyone." Yet Ananias is an exception to Warfield's theory that only the apostles and those whom the apostles laid hands on received the miraculous charismata. Ananias is exercising both the gift of healing and prophecy without any apostle having laid hands on him. Furthermore, when did Paul get miracle-working power if it was not at the same time that he was filled with the Spirit?
9. Masters attempts to discount the example of Ananias healing Saul in Acts chapter 9, but his reasons for doing so are not convincing at all.
10. According to Peter Masters, Paul is not referring to miracles that God was doing through members of the Galatian churches, but rather Paul is referring to miracles that he did in his recent visit to the Galatian churches (*The Healing Epidemic*, p. 134). If this view were true, Paul would not have used the present tense of the participle to describe this experience in Galatia. If Paul were referring to miracles that he did while he was in Galatia, he would have said, "Does the one who gave you his Spirit and *worked* miracles among you do so because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?" But Paul does not use a past tense. In fact, he uses the present tense of a participle, which indicates that this activity is going on at the time of his writing; that is, God is presently working miracles among the Galatian churches in Paul's absence.
- Some might allege that here it says that God works miracles, not that men gifted by God work miracles. In the New Testament, however, God is always the ultimate subject where miracles are concerned. For example, just prior to listing the charismata, Paul writes that God "works [energon] all of them in all men" (1 Cor. 12:6). At the time Paul wrote Galatians, it would have been much more normal according to New Testament practice to imagine that Galatians 3:5 refers to the gift of miracles in operation. Burton argues that Paul's language "implies that the apostle has in mind chiefly the charismatic manifestation of the Spirit" (Ernest De Witt Burton, *The Epistle to the Galatians* [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1921], p. 151). Lightfoot draws attention to the similarity of the participle *energon* in Galatians 3:5 with the *energemata* used to describe the gift of working miracles in 1 Corinthians 12:10 and concludes that "as in the epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul assumes the possession of these extraordinary powers by his converts as an acknowledged fact" (J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, reprint 1957], p. 136). Thus the epistles demonstrate that there was a wide distribution of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit across the New Testament church. They were not confined to the apostles and their very close associates.
- I agree that miracles were performed by those other than apostles, but here is overlooking his use here to call miracles of Galatians old church wide distribution.
- Appendix B: Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?
1. Benjamin B. Warfield, *Counterfeit Miracles* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1918, reprint 1972), pp. 235-36.
  2. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
  3. Peter Masters, *The Healing Epidemic* (London: The Wakeman Trust, 1988), pp. 69-70.
  4. In Philip's case the word *wonders* is not used, but it is apparent from the context that his ministry is no less miraculous than Stephen's or the apostles.
  5. The book of Acts does not mention any miraculous powers given to the other five men on whom the apostles laid hands. According to Acts 6:1-6, the purpose of the laying on of hands was not to impart miraculous powers but to set aside these seven men to take charge of the food ministry and make sure that all were treated fairly.
  6. The term "narrative literature" refers to those portions of Scripture which tell stories, such as the book of Kings in the Old Testament or the Gospels and Acts in the New Testament. Narrative literature is interpreted differently than poetry (the Song of Solomon), or hymnic literature (the Psalms), or wisdom literature (Proverbs and Ecclesiastes), or didactic literature (the New Testament epistles), or prophetic literature (Revelation), and so on.

## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (Endnotes 2 of 3)

- 288 Surprised by the Power of the Spirit
11. Warfield, *Counterfeit Miracles*, pp. 21–22.
12. See p. 234.
13. Timothy also received an additional spiritual gift through the laying on of Paul's hands (2 Tim. 1:6). Some would allege that these two passages refer to the same gifting. I know of no firm evidence, however, that would indicate that this is so. Furthermore, there is no evidence at all that Paul laid hands on all those who had spiritual gifts at Corinth (1 Cor. 12–14), at Rome (Rom. 12:6), Thessalonica (1 Thess. 5:20), Ephesus (Eph. 4:11), and Galatia (Gal. 3:5). Therefore, Warfield's argument is not only an argument from silence but also is contradicted by the specific facts of the New Testament.
14. Gross, *Miracles, Demons and Spiritual Warfare*, p. 49.
15. Gross, *Miracles, Demons and Spiritual Warfare*, p. 46.
16. Notice that Luke makes no explicit mention of spiritual gifts in connection with John and Peter's ministry to the Samaritans (Acts 8: 14–25). The emphasis is clearly not on receiving gifts but on receiving the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is mentioned five times in six verses (vv. 14–19), but the gifts are not explicitly mentioned once in Acts 8:14–25.
17. Max Turner, "Spiritual Gifts Then and Now," pp. 37–38.
18. Gross, *Miracles, Demons and Spiritual Warfare*, p. 48.
19. Some have also attempted to use 2 Corinthians 12:7–10 as another example of the failure of Paul's healing gift. However, all we know for sure about the problem in 2 Corinthians 12:7–10 is that a demonic tormentor was behind it (v. 7). We do not know whether the tormentor was causing an illness or some other kind of opposition to Paul's ministry, for example, persecution from the Judaizers. Consequently, this passage is irrelevant to the discussion of whether or not Paul's healing gift remained with him until the end of his life.
20. Geisler, *Signs and Wonders*, pp. 136–37.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 137.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
23. Ephesians, Philipians, Colossians, and Philemon are called the "prison epistles." Their dates are not exact. Some have thought they were written from Ephesus between A.D. 53–55, others from Caesarea between A.D. 57–59, but the general consensus seems to be that they were written from Rome between A.D. 60–61. 1 Timothy and Titus are believed to have been written between A.D. 63–65 after Paul had been released from his first Roman imprisonment. 2 Timothy is believed to have been written at the end of Paul's life, during his last Roman imprisonment between A.D. 66–67.
24. In fact, in Ephesians Paul does mention the gift of prophecy by referring to the fact that prophets are given to the church (Eph. 4: 11), a text that Geisler conveniently overlooks. When he was formulating his argument, he was careful not to mention that we have no record of prophecy during this time period of A.D. 60–68.
25. Notice that Luke began the book of Acts by referring to his Gospel as "all that Jesus began to do and to teach" (Acts 1:1, emphasis mine). The Gospel of Luke is the beginning of Jesus' acts and teachings, and the book of Acts is a continuation of the deeds and teachings of Jesus.
- 289 Notes
26. MacArthur has a similar way of handling the Scriptures. He writes of Paul that,
- Though he at one time seems to have had the ability to heal others at will (Acts 28:8), as Paul neared the end of his life he showed no evidence of such a gift. He advised Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake, a common way of treating illness in that day (1 Tim. 5:23). Later on, at the very end of his career, Paul left a beloved brother sick at Miletus (2 Tim. 4:20). He surely would have healed him if he could.
- In the early pages of Acts, Jerusalem was filled with miracles. After the martyrdom of Stephen, however, no more miracles were recorded in that city. Something was changing. (*Charismatic Chaos*, pp. 125–26)
- Does MacArthur seriously want us to believe that Scripture teaches that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were being withdrawn after the seventh chapter of Acts? Paul is not even converted yet, and we are supposed to believe that the gifts of the Spirit are being withdrawn from the apostles who stayed in Jerusalem! This is an unbelievable insensitivity to the literature of the New Testament. It is also an abuse of the New Testament to support one's own prejudicial interpretation.
- Beginning with the martyrdom of Stephen, Luke introduces what have become known as the "road narratives." In each of these road narratives there is movement away from Jerusalem. In chapter eight, for example, the Ethiopian eunuch is converted on a road moving away from Jerusalem. In chapter nine Paul is converted on a road away from Jerusalem. And in chapter ten Peter travels on a road leading away from Jerusalem to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. Yes, of course, "something is changing," but it is not a divine withdrawal of apostolic miracles. Luke is showing with consummate skill the beginning of a fulfillment of the Lord's prediction of judgment on Jerusalem. These things have been well known in the scholarly studies of Acts for years now. To attempt to use the movement away from Jerusalem in the book of Acts as indication that healing and miracles are leaving at approximately A.D. 35, no more than two years after the death of the Lord, is absolutely incredible.
- Furthermore, the whole idea that God withdrew Paul's healing gift before the end of his life may contradict Paul's statement in Romans 11:29: "For the gifts [charisma] and the calling of God are irrevocable" (NASB).
- For example, Wayne Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy*, pp. 275–76; and D. A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit*, pp. 88ff. Grudem agrees "apostle" is an office, not a spiritual gift.
- Someone might object, however, that Paul does refer to apostles as spiritual gifts because in Ephesians 4:11 he names apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers as examples of "gifts" mentioned earlier in Ephesians 4:8. However, the word translated "gift" in Ephesians 4:7 is not the word that Paul consistently uses elsewhere for spiritual gifts. In fact, in Ephesians

No, MacArthur only said that no more miracles were recorded in Jerusalem, which is still A.D. 35, 2 years after his death.

27. 9:36

28. 11:2, 21, 26 → 12:7, 25

15:1–35

29. 20:32

21:17

Acts' miraculous power scope

## Jack Deere, "Did Miraculous Gifts Cease With the Apostles?" (Endnotes 3 of 3)

## Notes 291

three. He included the time of Daniel as the fourth period. See B. B. Warfield, "Miracles" in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, 4th ed., J. D. Davis ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1954), p. 505.

2. MacArthur heard a tape of a message in which I made this point. He took issue with my interpretation in the following way:

Deere is so determined to find biblical support for an ongoing ministry of signs and wonders that he misreads Jeremiah 32:20. . . . Deere believes Jeremiah was saying signs and wonders continued in Egypt and Israel after the Exodus and that Jeremiah was acknowledging their existence even in his day. What Jeremiah actually wrote, of course, was that God had made a name for himself through the signs and wonders he performed in Egypt, and that his name was known "even to this day" both in Israel and among the Gentiles. Anyone familiar with Old Testament history knows that the miracles of the Exodus were unique, and the Israelites always recalled them as evidence of their God's greatness. (*Charismatic Chaos*, p.113)

Basically, MacArthur has criticized my usage of Jeremiah 32:20 by simply asserting that virtually everyone knows that Jeremiah was referring to signs and wonders of the past rather than to signs and wonders of his day.

Apparently MacArthur thought that this assertion was sufficient both as an explanation of Jeremiah 32:20 and as a refutation of my use of it. He did not refer to the Hebrew text underlying the expression "even unto this day" to see if it could bear the meaning he had assigned to it. Nor did he explore any contextual reasons that might have led him back to a more literal interpretation of what Jeremiah actually wrote. Nor did he cite any scholarly studies or any other support that could justify his rejection of the literal meaning of Jeremiah 32:20.

Although in MacArthur's opinion I may not qualify as "anyone familiar with Old Testament history," I would still like to suggest that Jeremiah's statement should be taken literally. The reasons for doing so are as follows. First, this is exactly what a literal interpretation of the Hebrew text means. The phrase translated "even unto this day," when used of customs or other activities, refers to the continuation of that activity at least up to the time of the speaker or writer (cf. Josh. 9:27; 13:13; 15:63; 16:10; 23:8-9, and B.D.B., p. 401 for many other examples). The NIV has translated the Hebrew text in its normal sense when it says of signs and wonders that God has "continued them to this day." Second, contextually the spirit of prophecy is still in the land at the time of Jeremiah's writing. Prophecy is both a sign and a wonder according to the Bible. Consider Isaiah's statement,

Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are for signs and wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion. (Isa. 8:18 NASB)

## 290 Surprised by the Power of the Spirit

4:11 Paul is describing not spiritual gifts (*charismata*) but five different ministries whose function is to equip the saints to do the work of ministry. Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 620.

31. Some dispute that this verse clearly sets forth James as an apostle, however, the Greek text virtually demands that we view James as an apostle. See Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy*, p. 272.

32. It is not as likely, however, that he is viewing Timothy as an apostle in 1 Thessalonians 2:7. See Grudem, *ibid.*, pp. 272-75.

33. There are, however, several different interpretive possibilities for this text. See Fee, *First Corinthians*, pp. 731-32. Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25), some anonymous brothers, and possibly Titus (2 Cor. 8:23) are also called apostles. However, most people feel that this is a nontechnical use of the term apostle, simply meaning "messenger."

34. This observation was made long ago by Robertson and Plummer, *First Epistle of St. John to the Corinthians*, 2d ed. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1914), p. 279.

35. In what has become one of the classic essays on New Testament apostleship, Karl Rengstorff maintained that "with personal encounter with the risen Lord, personal commissioning by Him seems to have been the only basis of the apostolate" (TDNT 1:431).

36. Some, however, have argued that the prophets mentioned in Ephesians 3:5, as well as Ephesians 2:20, are to be identified with the apostles. See Wayne Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy*, pp. 46ff.

37. MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*, pp. 123-25. Thomas Edgar claims that 1 Corinthians 15:8 is also an argument for the ceasing of the apostles. Paul was enumerating a list of people who had seen the Lord Jesus after his resurrection when he wrote of himself in verse eight, "And last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born." Edgar takes this to mean that Paul was the last one to see the risen Lord Jesus and, therefore, the last of all the apostles (*Miraculous Gifts* [Neptune, N.J.: Loizeaux Brothers, 1983], pp. 60-62). Even if this were the correct interpretation of 1 Corinthians 15:8, it would not mean that Jesus could not appear to people after the apostle Paul and appoint other apostles. All it would mean is that at the time of the writing of 1 Corinthians 15:8, Paul was the last one to have seen the Lord Jesus. This is not the only interpretation possible, however, nor even probable (see Fee, *First Corinthians*, pp. 732-34).

38. MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*, p. 124.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

40. Gross, *Miracles, Demons, and Spiritual Warfare*, p. 53.

## Appendix C: Were There Only Three Periods of Miracles?

1. MacArthur, *Charismatic Chaos*, pp. 112-14. It was Warfield who popularized this argument. He was, however, more careful than MacArthur in stating the argument. He maintained that there were four periods of revelation, not

## Robert A. Pyne's Response to Deere's Book

This is not an official response of Dallas Seminary but Pyne does teach at DTS and *Bib Sac* is the DTS journal

234 BIBLIOTHECA SACRA / April-June 1994 / Deere picks the poor arguments for cessationism

In contrast to the arguments Deere so easily refutes, more able cessationist arguments have focused carefully on a comparison between biblical descriptions and historical experiences. For example the better discussions of tongues make no effort to prove their cessation by appealing to 1 Corinthians 13:8. They instead demonstrate that the biblical gift enabled one to speak in actual, unlearned, foreign languages, and they then relate that to linguistic analyses that reveal contemporary Christian glossolalia to be something other than language. Surprisingly Deere makes no effort to describe or defend contemporary claims to tongues, but these are the kinds of biblical and experiential arguments he needs to consider with regard to all the gifts whenever biblically based descriptions may be formulated.

Deere pays some attention to historical evidence in his critique of B. B. Warfield's *Counterfeit Miracles* (reprint, Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1983), but he does not adequately account for the apparent absence of the miraculous gifts in history. At times he suggests that gifts may not be experienced because of ecclesiastical bureaucracy, apostasy, legalism, or unbelief, and there may be some merit to his criticisms in these areas. At the same time it is difficult to apply those charges on such a broad scale, particularly to the giants of the faith. A similar problem arises with regard to the apparent presence of the gifts in other circles. Deere attempts to distance himself from the abuses of some contemporary charismatic leaders, but he does not adequately distinguish between their experiences and his own.

The book provides several positive notes, but these are often plagued by inconsistency. Deere argues that no one is truly objective in approaching the biblical text, yet he seems to claim that kind of objectivity when he speaks of coming to the text himself "with an open mind." Similarly he provides several irenic suggestions for those who are in the midst of personal controversy over the gifts and he makes a positive comment about Dallas Seminary, but those statements are overshadowed by anecdotes and innuendoes sprinkled throughout the book (and even in the subtitle). In the same way, Deere rejects the idea that contemporary prophecy could add inspired works to the canon, but he quotes prophetic utterances or impressions as one might a favorite psalm. Other positive contributions, such as Deere's chapter on developing a passion for God, are much more appreciated.

Though he is not the first to demonstrate weaknesses in a number of traditional cessationist arguments, Deere will likely step to the forefront of the debate with this book. For this reason it is highly recommended, even for those who remain skeptical regarding its conclusion.

Robert A. Pyne

BIBLIOTHECA SACRA 151 (April-June 1994): 233-56

## BOOK REVIEWS

BY THE FACULTY OF DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Lin M. Williams, Editor

*Surprised by the Power of the Spirit: A Former Dallas Seminary Professor Discovers That God Speaks and Heals Today.* By Jack Deere. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993. 256 pp. \$17.99.

This subject is misleading. DTS deems the gift of healing today but not all healing. DTS also acknowledges that God speaks today through the Word and the Spirit's work in the life of each Christian.

In this book, Jack Deere, formerly an associate professor of Old Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary, describes and defends his reasons for abandoning cessationism in favor of the belief that miraculous and prophetic spiritual gifts are being experienced today. The book is intended for a popular audience, but it represents perhaps the most careful defense of "vineyard" or "signs and wonders" theology to date.

Deere is familiar with most cessationist arguments, having once maintained that position with a great assurance (even arrogance, judging from conversations recounted in this book). He rightly rejects many familiar arguments, demonstrating that they have no legitimacy in the biblical text. For example Deere refutes those who say Paul progressively lost his ability to perform miracles, and he demonstrates that miraculous events were not simply clustered in three eras of biblical revelation. At the same time, he challenges cessationists to explain several documented cases of healing in recent years, some of which he says were accompanied by prophetic pronouncements.

This line of argument relates directly to Deere's thesis: no biblical arguments are adequate to support cessationism, and experience demonstrates that the miraculous and prophetic gifts are being given today. Deere is correct in arguing that no text directly states that the gifts would cease with the death of the last apostle, and he is correct in saying that the discussion largely boils down to evaluating historical and contemporary experience, but he does not give adequate attention to the fact that that evaluation must be based on biblical criteria.

For example Deere appeals to a number of contemporary examples of what he regards as prophecy, but he does not engage in a comparison between those experiences and the biblical descriptions of prophecy (e.g., Deut. 18:18-22; 2 Pet. 1:21). Other defenders of modern-day prophecy have considered the character of Old and New Testament prophecy in detail, but Deere does not. With the exception of his more careful study on the gift of healing, he seems to assume certain biblical gifts are comparable to contemporary experience.

-Deere has sought to address this concern in his subsequent book, *Surprised by the Power of God* (Zondervan, 1995).



John F. MacArthur, Jr., "The Issue of Tongues"  
*The Charismatics*  
 (1 of 13)

*The Issue of Tongues: Part I* 157

other weird things as the "high" sought became more elusive. Eventually there is a crisis and a decision is made; he will sit on the back seats and be a spectator, "fake it," or go on in the hope that everything will eventually be as it was. The most tragic decision is to quit and in the quitting abandon all things spiritual as fraudulent. The spectators are frustrated, the fakers suffer guilt, the hoping are pitiable and the quitters are a tragedy. No, such movements are not harmless!<sup>2</sup>

A few writers have tried to take a stand in the middle, trying to present both sides. Wayne Robinson, who served as editor-in-chief of publications in the Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association, was an enthusiastic speaker in tongues at one time. Later, however, he reacted against the practice. In the preface of his book *I Once Spoke in Tongues*, he said:

However, in the past few years, I have become more and more convinced that the test, not only of tongues but of any religious experience, cannot be limited to the logic and truthfulness supporting it. There is also the essential question, "What does it do in one's life?" More specifically, does it turn a person inward to self-concern and selfish interests, or does it open him up to others, and their needs?

I know people who testify that speaking in tongues has been the great liberating experience of their lives. But juxtaposed with them are a great many others for whom speaking in tongues has been an excuse to withdraw from confronting the realities of a suffering and divided world. For some, tongues has been the greatest thing ever to happen; others have seen it disrupt churches, destroy careers, and rupture personal relationships.<sup>3</sup>

### THREE BIBLICAL BOOKS MENTION TONGUES

Tongues are mentioned in three books of the Bible: Mark (chap. 16); Acts (chaps. 2, 10, 19); and 1 Corinthians (chaps. 12-14). We have already covered several of the passages in Acts in regard to the issue of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (see chap. 9). We shall deal with the tongues passages in Acts again here as well as what the Scriptures teach in 1 Corinthians, especially chapters 12-14.

In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul discusses the *endowments* of the gifts, the receiving of the gifts, and the way God has put the gifts together in the church so all can function as one. In 1 Corinthians 14 Paul discussed the inferiority of tongues to

## CHAPTER 13

# The Issue of Tongues: Part I

### *What Does the Bible Teach About Tongues?*

Without question the most controversial "gift" connected with the Charismatic movement is "speaking in tongues." Dozens of books—pro, con, and middle ground—have been written on tongues. Some take the positive view, describing tongues as a spiritual summum bonum, an experience without parallel to draw you closer to Jesus. The testimony of Robert V. Morris is shared by John Sherrill:

For me . . . the gift of tongues turned out to be the gift of praise. As I used the unknown language which God had given me I felt rising in me the love, the awe, the adoration pure and untinged, that I had not been able to achieve in thought-out prayer.<sup>1</sup>

This would be a sentiment echoed by many other tongues speakers.

Others, however, condemn tongues as dangerous or deceptive. Commenting on the Charismatic movement in this regard, George Gardiner, a former Pentecostal, described the potential dangers and disappointments for the tongues speaker:

So the seeker for experience goes back through the ritual again and again, but begins to discover something; ecstatic experience, like drug-addiction, requires larger and larger doses to satisfy. Sometimes the bizarre is introduced. I have seen people run around a room until they were exhausted, climb tent poles, laugh hysterically, go into trances for days and do

## John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (2 of 13)

Rick Griffith, PhD

Spiritual Gifts: Readings

John F. MacArthur, Jr. *The Charismatics* (2 of 13)

112

The Issue of Tongues: Part 1 159

different countries and areas whose languages were being heard (vv. 8-11).

### ★ SEVEN REASONS WHY "TONGUES" MEANS "LANGUAGES"

There are a number of reasons why known languages are always in view when the true gift of "tongues" is mentioned in Scripture. Here are several key arguments:

1. *The Greek word "glossa" primarily means human language when used in Scripture.* Several times in the New Testament it refers to the human tongue, but it is the normal word for language. This is true of the New Testament and the Old. The word *glossa* is used some thirty times in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint) and always its meaning is normal human language.

2. *Also used here is the Greek word "dialektos," from which we get the English word "dialect" (Acts 2:6,8).* Some of those at Pentecost heard God's message proclaimed in their own language; some heard it in their own dialect. Classifications like languages and dialects would never have been used if ecstatic speech had been presented.

3. *The same term for language is used later in the Book of Acts and in 1 Corinthians 12-14.* Some Pentecostals and Charismatics claim, "Yes, languages are mentioned in the second chapter of Acts, but after that it means something else." But if we look at the mention of tongues in later chapters in Acts (10:46, 19:6), we'll find the very same word being used—*glossa*, languages. Throughout the Book of Acts the Greek term used for tongues is consistently the one that refers to normal languages. It is interesting to note that *glossa* always appears in the plural form throughout Acts, indicating a *multiple of languages*. Gibberish, however, could never appear in the plural form because there aren't multiple kinds of gibberish. There is no such word as "gibberishes" because gibberish is nonclassifiable into more than one.

We find the same thing in 1 Corinthians 14. When Paul used the singular in verses 2, 4, 13, 14, and 19, he was referring to the counterfeit pagan gibberish (unintelligible speech) that was being used by many of the Corinthian believers instead of the true gift of languages. Whenever Paul wanted to refer to

The Charismatics 158

prophesying and the proper exercise of the gift of tongues. And right in the middle of these two chapters—in 1 Corinthians 13—Paul discussed the proper *motive* in which the gifts should operate, namely, love. Usually quoted out of context and used as a supreme example of a literary achievement, 1 Corinthians 13 has often been called the Love Chapter of the Bible. But it is crucial to remember 1 Corinthians 13 is primarily part of Paul's discussion of the misuse of the gifts of the Spirit in the Corinthian church. Quite possibly, no gift was being misused more than that of tongues, or languages.

### THE PROMINENCE OF LOVE, NOT GIFTS

First Corinthians 13:1-3 is Paul's description of the prominence of love. In verse 1 Paul plainly stated that languages (tongues) without love are nothing. One of his main concerns was that the Corinthian Christians were using gifts of the Spirit without love. They were more interested in a spiritual ego trip or in enjoying spiritual euphoria than they were in treating one another with self-sacrificing concern—agape love.

Paul was saying that if he wished, he could have used his gift of languages (see 1 Cor. 14:18). But if he used this gift without love, he would only be so much noise—like the rhythm band in a kindergarten class. A key question arises at this point. What did Paul mean by the "tongues of men and of angels?" What is the gift of languages? There is much disagreement today on these questions. I believe, however, that the Bible is exceedingly clear on what this gift was. And the best place to go is to the first mention of tongues in Acts 2.

Acts 2:1-11 describes the great day of Pentecost, the birthday of the church. There was a sound like a mighty rushing wind. Cloven tongues like fire seemed to appear on the disciples. And they spoke in other languages. The Greek word used in this passage is *glossa*, the normative Greek word for "language." Many within the Charismatic movement today claim that the gift of tongues is a "private prayer language," ecstatic uttering in a language known only to God. But here in Acts 2 it is clear that the disciples were speaking in *known* languages. Unbelieving Jews living in Jerusalem at the time "were bewildered, because they were each one hearing them speak in his own language." Luke went on to name some fifteen

## John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (3 of 13)

160 *The Charismatics*

the real gift of languages, he used the plural. The only exception is 1 Corinthians 14:27, where Paul was no doubt referring to the real gift but mentioning a single man speaking a single language which demands a single form.

The King James Version used the word "unknown" with all these singulars to designate a difference between the pagan ecstatic speech and the true gift in plural form, which has no "unknown" in front of it. It appears that the King James Version translators correctly used the term "unknown" throughout chapter 14 except in verse 27, for the reason pointed out above.<sup>4</sup>

4. *First Corinthians 12:10 mentions the same word, "glossa," and goes on to talk about interpretation of languages.* The Greek word here for interpretation is *hermeneuo*, which means "translation." You cannot translate ecstatic speech or babble. The act of translation means to take something in one language and put it into its equivalent in another known language. This was a supernatural ability to translate an unlearned language so that believers present might be edified (1 Cor. 14:5). But where gibberish is spoken, there is no way to truly translate.

5. *First Corinthians 12:10 mentions different "kinds" of languages.* The Greek word for kinds is *genos*, from which we get the word genus. *Genos* means a family or a group or a race or a nation. Linguists are familiar with the term "language families." Again, the reference means normal human speech.

6. *First Corinthians 14:21 indicates that tongues were a foreign language given as a sign to unbelieving Israel.* Paul referred to Isaiah 28:11 and 12 when he said, "In the Law it is written, 'By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, and even so they will not listen to me,' says the Lord." And then Paul went on to say that tongues are for a sign, not for believers, but for unbelievers—unbelieving Israel as Isaiah 28:11-12 points out.

Who were the men of strange tongues who fulfilled the prophesy from Isaiah? They were the Assyrians who spoke genuine Assyrian! (more on this later in the chapter).

7. *First Corinthians 14:27 indicates a genuine language since it was to be translated.* Paul warned the Corinthian believers that if any one of them should speak in a language in

*The Issue of Tongues: Part I*

161

their assembly, "it should be by two or at the most three, and each in turn, and let one interpret." This indicates a genuine language because it must be translated. Failure to do this will result in the confusion indicated in verse 23. "If therefore the whole church should assemble together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad?"

As we pointed out in chapter 8, the mystery religions were well known in Corinth in the first century. Mystery religions made wide use of tongues—ecstatic babble. And the Corinthians had apparently corrupted the gift of tongues by using the ecstatic counterfeit. Paul was trying to correct them by telling them that ecstatic babble wasn't the gift of tongues at all; and if they used it, they would do harm and not good for the cause of Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 14 Paul criticized this perversion of gifts. The Corinthians were using their "gift of tongues" to speak to God and not to men (see v. 2). Spiritual gifts were never intended to be used for God's benefit. (The apostle Peter made this clear in 1 Peter 4:10: "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another.")

Paul's comment in 1 Corinthians 14:2 is not a commendation to the Corinthians; he was using satire. It is also possible from the Greek, because of the absence of the definite article, to translate the term for God as "a god"—referring to a pagan deity. Whether we want to take 1 Corinthians 14:2 as satire or as a reference to a pagan deity, it is condemnation, not commendation. The context demands this.

Another reason why the Corinthian use of the gift of tongues was not serving others was because tongues were being used for selfish ego building. Paul said as much in 1 Corinthians 14:4: "One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church." In 1 Corinthians 10:24 Paul had already made clear this principle: "Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor." First Corinthians 8:10 uses the same Greek word, here translated "edify," which refers to a wrong use of edification, which can lead to sin.

Paul also suggested that the use of the Corinthians were making of the gift of tongues was selfish. First Corinthians 14:16-17 says: "Otherwise if you bless in the spirit only, how

## John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (4 of 13)

*The Issue of Tongues: Part 1* 163

other kind of language we find in Scripture apart from human language is that used by the Holy Spirit in Romans 8:26, when He communicates our needs to the Father with groanings that cannot be uttered.

What was Paul saying here? He was not necessarily stating factual reality. He was using hyperbole—exaggeration—to make a point. In the Greek, verses 2 and 3 of 1 Corinthians 13 use subjunctive verbs. Normally, when the subjunctive is used in the Greek, it indicates an improbable, a hypothetical hyperbolic situation. In order to make his point about the necessity for love, Paul was trying to stretch his comments about speech to the outer limits. He was saying, "No matter how fine or wonderful or miraculous your speech might be—even if you could talk angel talk—if you don't have love, you are nothing but noise."

Although it is hard to make an absolute connection, it is fascinating to note that two of the mystery religions common in that part of the world had two false gods called Cybele and Dionysius. And used in the worship of both of these false gods was speaking in tongues (ecstatic babble) accompanied by *clanging symbols, smashing gongs, and blaring trumpets*.<sup>8</sup> There is no way to be sure Paul had these mystery religions in mind when he wrote 1 Corinthians 13:1, but it is fairly certain that he definitely had the corruption of the gift of tongues in mind when he wrote this section of his letter to the Corinthian church.

If the primary purpose of tongues (known languages) was to be a sign to unbelieving Israel (see 1 Cor. 14:21-22), then the only time tongues could have any meaning to a Christian is when they would be translated. To say that the biblical gift of tongues is the ecstatic speech used today by the Charismatics in their private devotions is to force a meaning into the biblical text that is not there.

**TONGUES, ETC., WILL FAIL; LOVE WILL NOT**

In 1 Corinthians 13:8 Paul made an interesting, almost startling, statement. Love never fails but prophecy and knowledge will be "done away" while tongues "will cease." In the Greek the word for "fail" means "to fall" or "be abolished." Paul was not saying love cannot be rejected, that love cannot be

*The Charismatics* 162

will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying? "For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified." What Paul was saying here is that the tongues speaker was being selfish, ignoring the rest of the people in the congregation.

A study of Acts and 1 Corinthians shows again and again that the Bible does not teach that tongues are an ecstatic prayer language. In spite of this, ecstatic utterances are what normally pass for "tongues" in the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement. William Samarin, professor of linguistics at the University of Toronto, wrote:

Over a period of five years I have taken part in meetings in Italy, Holland, Jamaica, Canada and the United States. I have observed old-fashioned Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals. I have been in small meetings in private homes as well as in mammoth public meetings. I have seen such different cultural settings as are found among Puerto Ricans of the Bronx, the snake handlers of the Appalachians and the Russian Molokans of Los Angeles . . . I have interviewed tongue speakers, and tape recorded and analyzed countless samples of Tongues. In every case, glossolalia turns out to be linguistic nonsense. In spite of superficial similarities, glossolalia is fundamentally not language.<sup>9</sup>

William Samarin is one of many men who has made a study of glossolalia. These studies bear out that what we are hearing today is not language; and if it is not language, then it is not what the Bible says the gift of tongues really is.

**WHAT IS ANGEL TALK?**

If the Bible always refers to tongues as normal human language, what, then, does 1 Corinthians 13:1 mean? Paul said that if he spoke with the "tongues of men and angels" but had not love, he was just a lot of noise. Could the "tongues of angels" be the ecstatic speech that the Charismatics claim is the true gift?

One problem with trying to equate the ecstatic utterances in 1 Corinthians 13:1 with the gift of tongues is that we find no mention of "angel talk" anywhere else in the Bible. In fact, all we can find is angels communicating with humans in normal human language. (See, for example, Luke 1:26ff.) The only



## John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (5 of 13)

## The Issue of Tongues: Part I 165

would come to an end, but the question is: When? Pentecostal and Charismatic brothers in Christ insist that none of the gifts have ceased; so the "when" is far in the future. At the other end of the spectrum I have heard a very prominent pastor and Bible teacher say that all the gifts have *already* ceased. According to this man there are no spiritual gifts today. Other people say some of the gifts are with us and some are gone, which is essentially my own view.

It is important to note that in 1 Corinthians 13:8 the words used give a clear indication that tongues will cease at a different point in time than prophecy and knowledge. Regarding prophecy and knowledge we are told that they will be "done away," "rendered inoperative," or "abolished," depending upon one's particular translation. The Greek root word used here for "done away" is *katargeo*. This same Greek verb is used to refer to prophecy and knowledge, but it is not the verb used when Paul spoke about how tongues would cease. The Greek verb used in regard to tongues is *pauso*, which simply means "to stop."

It is also helpful to realize that the verb *katargeo* is in the passive tense. A rule of grammar is that when a passive verb is in a sentence, the subject receives the action. Something is acting upon the subject, and in this case 1 Corinthians 13:8 tells us that something is going to abolish prophecy and knowledge.

Prophecy and knowledge will be acted upon by some other force, and they will be done away. That other force Paul called "the perfect thing." It will cause prophecy and knowledge to cease while the gift of tongues will have ceased by itself *before* the perfect thing. That is why we see tongues disappearing from the text after verse 8 while the references to prophecy and knowledge go on: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away" (1 Cor. 13:9-10).

Many suggestions have been made as to the identity of "the perfect thing." Some believe it is the canon; others say the maturing of the church; some hold out for the rapture and still more for the second coming. But it seems that "the perfect thing" has to be the eternal state—the new heaven and new earth created after the kingdom as the following two points show:

## The Charismatics 164

defeated by someone who refuses to accept it. He was saying, however, that love is eternal—that it will be available forever, that it will never give up.

Paul made it a definite point to emphasize the temporary nature of the gifts because he wanted to help the Corinthian believers see that their emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit was wrong. Their motive was to show off, to demonstrate their spirituality to one another. In many cases, however, they were demonstrating carnality and counterfeits of the real thing.

Paul told the Corinthians that three very prominent gifts were going to come to an end. Often mistaken for the ability to foretell the future, the gift of prophecy was actually the ability to proclaim God's Word. The Greek word used here is from the verb, *propheteuo*, which literally means "to speak before." The primary sense is before someone in some place, though secondarily it may mean "before" in the sense of time (prediction). This is usually indicated clearly in the context. The gift, then, is the ability to speak before people, to proclaim God's Word, sometimes with a predictive element.

First Corinthians 14:3 tells us that the "one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation." The gift of prophecy was used to build people up, encourage them in good behavior, and to comfort them in trouble.

Paul also said that the gift of knowledge would likewise come to an end. The gift of knowledge is the ability to observe facts and to make observations to draw spiritual truths out of the Word of God. It is the gift of being able to understand God's Word and to share that understanding with others.

The third gift that will come to an end, according to 1 Corinthians 13:8, is the gift of tongues or languages. As discussed earlier in this chapter, this gift was not ecstatic speech but the ability to speak a foreign language one had never learned before as a sign of God's judgment to unbelieving Jews.

It is important to note that the gift of tongues was also a sign authenticating apostolic authority. Particularly in Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19 it served to validate the authority of the apostles as the new agents through whom God was working and speaking.

First Corinthians 13:8 makes it clear that these three gifts

## John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (6 of 13)

*The Issue of Tongues: Part 1* 167

along with the other sign gifts had ceased to serve any purpose. The death of the apostles would also end their use since they were specifically tied to them (2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3, 4).

2. *The miracle of tongues was a judicial sign to Israel because of Israel's unbelief.* As we saw earlier in the chapter, 1 Corinthians 14:22 clearly states that tongues are for a sign, not for those who believe, but to unbelievers. In 1 Corinthians 14:21 Paul was obviously referring back to unbelieving Israelites because he quoted Isaiah 28:11-12, where the prophet wrote to Israel saying, "By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people, and even so they will not listen to me."

The context of Isaiah 28 is set in the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah (705-701 B.C.). The Assyrians had invaded Palestine and had conquered and destroyed Israel, the northern kingdom.

Isaiah reprimanded the leaders of Judah for their drunken reveling. They mocked him, and Isaiah replied to their mockery with a severe warning of coming judgment. Indeed, God would speak to them through stammering lips and a foreign tongue.

In other words, the Jews would not listen when God spoke to them in plain Hebrew; so God would speak to them in a language they would not understand. It was to be the language of the Assyrian invaders from Babylon.

Because of Judah's constant unbelief and departure from the faith, God was going to bring judgment upon her—a judgment signaled by languages—other tongues" (cf. Deut. 28:49; Jer. 5:15).

This prophecy found its fulfillment when the Babylonians conquered Judah in 586 B.C. and even greater judgment would come later to the nation in A.D. 70. Jesus Himself had said, "Your house is left to you desolate" (Luke 13:35).

Jesus had clearly warned, "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand . . . and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles" (Luke 21:20, 24).

In A.D. 70, Titus the Roman sacked Jerusalem, killing 1,100,000 Jews and scattering the rest all over the world. The

*The Charismatics* 166

1. In the millennial kingdom there will be prophesying and teaching resulting in knowledge (see Isa. 11:9, 30:20-21, 32:3-4; Jer. 3:14-15; 23:1-4; Joel 2:28ff.; Rev. 11:1ff.). All these passages indicate there will be an unparalleled teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit and worldwide increase in knowledge.

2. It also seems to me that "face to face" in 1 Corinthians 13:12 can only be explained as being with God in the new creation. In a sense, "the perfect thing" occurs for any believer the moment he goes to be with Jesus Christ; but chronologically the perfect thing comes in history at the initiation of the eternal state when all is perfected.

## WHY TONGUES HAVE CEASED

First Corinthians 13:8 states plainly that "tongues will cease." In regard to this "ceasing," the Greek verb is not passive but in the middle voice, which always gives an emphasis to the subject doing the acting. What this phrase in verse 8 is saying is that "tongues will stop by themselves."

If tongues are to stop by themselves, the question is: When? After seven years of studying the question and reading all sides of the issue, and discussing it with Charismatics as well as non-Charismatics, I am convinced beyond any reasonable doubt that tongues ceased in the apostolic age and that when they stopped, they stopped for good.

There are at least six substantial reasons why tongues have ceased.

1. *Tongues was a miracle gift, and the age of miracles ended with the apostles.* The last recorded miracle in the New Testament occurred around A.D. 58 with the healing of Publius' father (Acts 28:7-10). From A.D. 58 to 96, when John finished the Book of Revelation, no miracle is recorded. Miracle gifts like tongues and healing are mentioned only in the earliest epistles such as 1 Corinthians. When you get into Ephesians and Romans, both of which discuss gifts of the Spirit at length, no mention is made of the miracle gifts. By that time the commonness of miracles was already looked on as something in the past because God's Word and revelation were already substantially confirmed and established.

It is reasonable to assume that by the end of the first century the church was committed to the Word, and tongues

## John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (7 of 13)

The Issue of Tongues: Part 1 169

4. *Speaking in tongues was rendered useless when the New Testament was complete.* Theoretically, the person who spoke in tongues was receiving revelation from God. As we have argued in chapters 2 and 3, direct revelation from God has ceased. The gift of tongues was an agency to authenticate the writers of revelation. When they died, the marks of their authentication were no longer needed.

5. *Tongues are mentioned only in the earliest books of the New Testament.* First Corinthians is the only epistle where tongues are even mentioned. Paul wrote at least twelve other epistles and never mentioned tongues again. Peter never mentioned tongues; James never mentioned tongues; John never mentioned tongues. Neither did Jude. Tongues appeared briefly in the early days of the church as the new word of God was being spread and the church was being established. But once this occurred, tongues were gone. They stopped.

6. *History records that tongues did cease.* In 1 Corinthians 13:8 the verb *pauo* tells us that tongues were to cease, meaning that they would never start up again. The later books of the New Testament do not mention tongues again. Cleon Rogers, scholar-missionary, wrote, "It is significant that the gift of tongues is nowhere alluded to, hinted at or even found in any writings of the Post Apostolic Fathers."<sup>8</sup>

Clement of Rome, Justin Martyr, Origen, Chrysostom, and Augustine—some of the greatest theologians of the ancient church—considered tongues a remote practice, something that happened in the very early days of Christianity.

During the first four or five hundred years of the church, the only people reported to have spoken in "tongues" were followers of Montanus who was branded a heretic (see chap. 3) and his disciple Tertullian.

The next time anything regarding "tongues" is found within Christianity is with a group called the Cevenol priests who lived in France in the late seventeenth century. They were branded heretics because their prophecies went unfulfilled and their militancy was frowned upon.

Around 1731 a group of Roman Catholic reformers called the Jansenists were reported to be holding night meetings in their leader's tomb where supposed ecstatic "tongues" occurred.

The Charismatics 168

gift of languages was a sign of this judgment on unbelieving Israel (1 Cor. 14:22). Unbelieving Gentiles would only be confused by it as seen in verse 23: "If therefore the whole church should assemble together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad?"

The message to Israel was clear. No longer would God confine Himself to one people as a channel; no longer would God operate His work of grace through one nation and speak one language. Their unbelief changed that. Tongues, then, were the sign of the removal of national blessing on Israel.

But tongues also became a sign of the widening of blessing because God would now speak to all nations in all languages. The barriers were down. The gift of languages, then, not only signaled the curse of God on Israel but also the blessing of God on the world.

Tongues were a sign for that transition. A new day had dawned for the people of God. God would speak in all languages. O. Palmer Robertson aptly articulated the consequence of this:

Today there is no need for a sign to show that God is moving from the single nation of Israel to all the nations. That movement has become an accomplished fact. As in the case of the founding office of apostle, so the particularly transitional gift of tongues has fulfilled its function as covenantal sign for the Old and New Covenant people of God. Once having fulfilled that role, it has no further function among the people of God.<sup>7</sup>

3. *The gift of tongues was inferior to the gift of prophecy.* Paul made this clear in 1 Corinthians 14:1-3 when he encouraged the Corinthians to pursue love and to desire spiritual gifts but to put prophecy ahead of tongues because prophecy would do far more to edify others. The entire emphasis of 1 Corinthians 14 is to convince the Corinthians of the superiority of the gift of prophecy to the gift of tongues.

Tongues can't edify the church in a proper way, only a pseudo self-edification is possible (see v. 4). This is precisely what Paul forbade in 13:5, "[Love] does not seek its own." The church meets for edification. Tongues have no place in private edification, nor are they to be used for edifying the church. Prophesying is to do the edifying (see 1 Cor. 14:3).

## John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (8 of 13)

*The Issue of Tongues: Part 1* 171

2. Other Charismatics—and probably the majority—say that tongues did cease but they started up again because we are in the last days and God is giving us the final outpouring of His Spirit.

#### THE CHARISMATIC MISINTERPRETATION OF JOEL 2:28

A key text for Pentecostals and Charismatics is Joel 2:28: "And it will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions." The problem with a current application of Joel 2:28 is that Joel was prophesying concerning something far in the future, not something that happened in the first century or the twentieth.

According to Joel 2:19-32, God's Spirit will be poured out in such a way that there will be wonders in the sky and on the earth—blood, fire, and columns of smoke. "The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes." This is obviously a prophecy of the coming millennial kingdom in the end times and cannot refer to anything earlier. The full context of the Joel passage makes this the only plausible interpretation.

For example, Joel 2:20 is a reference to the defeat of the northern army that wins against Israel in the tribulation time. Verse 27 of the same chapter speaks of the great revival that will bring Israel back to God. This is another feature of the tribulation time not yet fulfilled. Joel 3 describes the judgment of the nations, another event that comes at the close of the tribulation and just before the establishment of the earthly kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ (vv. 2, 12, 14). Later in chapter 3 Joel gave a beautiful description of the kingdom (v. 18). Clearly Joel 3 is a kingdom prophecy, all of which was not fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2) or on any occasion since. It must be future to now.

There is still, however, the question of why Peter repeated Joel 2:28-32 on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17-21). Some Bible teachers say that Peter was claiming that the gift of the Holy Spirit to the church on the day of Pentecost was a fulfillment of Joel 2:28. At best, however, it was only a partial

170 *The Charismatics*

Another group that spoke in "tongues" was the Shakers, followers of Mother Ann Lee, who lived from 1736 to 1784. Mother Ann Lee regarded herself as the female equivalent of Jesus Christ. She founded the Shaker Community in Troy, New York, and claimed that she had received revelation from God that sexual intercourse was corrupt even within marriage. In order to "mortify the flesh" and to help her followers learn how to resist sexual temptations, she instituted the practice of men and women dancing together in the nude while they spoke in "tongues."<sup>9</sup>

In 1830 Edward Irving started a little group in London called the Irvingites. They had revelations that contradicted Scripture. Their prophecies went unfulfilled and their supposed healings were followed by death. They also spoke in "tongues."

From Montanus to Edward Irving, instances of "tongues" within the church were never considered to be part of genuine Christianity.

But in 1901 at Bethel Bible College, Topeka, Kansas, Agnes Ozman received what she called the baptism of the Spirit and spoke in "tongues." The practice then became part of the Holiness movement of the church in the United States. In 1906 tongues were spoken on Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California, and out of these two events in 1901 and 1906 grew the mainline Pentecostal denominations to which many of our brothers and sisters in Christ belong today.

In 1960, in Van Nuys, California, the modern Charismatic movement began in an Episcopalian church. It soon spread across mainline denominations of all kinds, including Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Baptist.

The obvious question is "If the gift of tongues has ceased, how can their reoccurrence have happened in the twentieth century?"

Our Pentecostal/Charismatic brothers and sisters have to treat this question in one of two ways:

1. They can say that they claim Montanus, Mother Ann Lee, and some of the others who spoke in tongues as their forerunners. Some Pentecostals and Charismatics do make these claims, but in so doing they put themselves in a heretical position.

## John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (9 of 13)

172

*The Charismatics*

fulfillment, or as some have coined the word, "Prefulfillment."

On the day of Pentecost were there wonders in the heavens and signs in the earth? Was there blood and fire and vapors of smoke? Did the sun turn to darkness and the moon to blood and did the great and terrible day of the Lord come? No, none of these things happened—all this is in the future.

What Peter was telling those present at Pentecost was that they were getting a preliminary glimpse of the kind of power that the Spirit would release over all flesh in the millennial kingdom. What they were seeing in Jerusalem among a handful of people was a sign of what God's Spirit would do some day on a worldwide basis.

One of the fine Bible scholars of the nineteenth century, George N. H. Peters, wrote, "The Baptism of Pentecost is a pledge of fulfillment in the future, evidencing what the Holy Ghost will yet perform in the coming age."<sup>10</sup> German theologian Helmut Thielicke holds the same theory as Peters did. Thielicke considered the miracles of the first century as "lightning on the horizon of the Kingdom of God."<sup>11</sup> The miracles that began on the day of Pentecost to confirm God's revelation in the beginning of His church are lightning flashes that draw our attention to what is beyond the horizon—the coming earthly kingdom of Jesus Christ.

We might comment at this juncture that Charismatics make a big point out of "the former rain and the latter rain" of Joel 2:23. They want us to believe that the former rain was Pentecost when the Spirit came and the latter rain is now, when He is outpoured in the twentieth century.

The former rain is when it rains on the crops in autumn and the latter rain is the spring rain. Joel was saying that in the millennial earth both those rains will come "in the first" (literal Hebrew) month. The point is that God will make crops grow profusely in the kingdom. Joel 2:24-26 makes this abundantly obvious. The "former and latter rain" have nothing to do with Pentecost, the twentieth century, or the Holy Spirit.

In summary, the Pentecostals and Charismatics have definite difficulties with using Joel 2:28 as a basis for saying tongues have started again. In the first place, Joel did not say tongues would come back when the outpouring of the Spirit occurs. In the second place, the outpouring of the Spirit at

*The Issue of Tongues: Part 1*

173

Pentecost was not the outpouring that Joel prophesied about. He was referring to something in the kingdom—still in the future. Tongues had a unique purpose as a sign. Like all signs they pointed to something. Once the event came, the signs became superfluous. There is no indication they have re-turned.



## John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (10 of 13)

## The Issue of Tongues: Part 2

175

peace, satisfaction, and joy until they *came out* of the tongues movement. Without question, some people find speaking in tongues beneficial to one degree or another, but what they are practicing is not the biblical gift of tongues. Indeed what they are doing can end in disillusionment as the need to continually have an ecstatic experience becomes harder and harder to fill.

There are several explanations for the "tongues" that we hear about today.

1. Tongues may be satanic or demonic. Some critics of the Charismatics and the Pentecostals would write off tongues completely as "the work of the devil." While we are not ready to do that, we do believe that in some cases Satan is behind what happens. Why? because every false religion in the world was spawned from the same individual—Satan.

False religions are known for tongues—ecstatic babblings—euphoric experiences. Current editions of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* contain helpful articles on tongues speaking among pagans in their worship rites. Reports have come from East Africa telling of persons possessed by demons who spoke fluently in Swahili or English although under normal circumstances they would not understand either language.

Among the Thonga people of Africa, when a demon is exorcised, a song is usually sung in Zulu even though the Thonga people don't know Zulu. The one doing the exorcising is supposedly able to speak Zulu by a "miracle of tongues."

Today ecstatic speech is found among Muslims, Eskimos, and Tibetan monks. A parapsychology laboratory of the University of Virginia Medical School reports incidents of tongues speaking among those practicing the occult.<sup>2</sup>

These are only a few examples of tongues speaking that have gone on down through the centuries and which continue today among pagans, heretics, and worshipers of the occult. While it is doubtful that many of those in the Charismatic movement would fall into this particular category, it is something for every Charismatic to think about.

2. Tongues is a learned behavior. Tongues speaking is not a supernatural experience. It is not a miracle. A person just learns how to do it. This may be by far and away the most

## CHAPTER 14

## The Issue of Tongues: Part 2

## What Kind of "Tongues" Are Being Spoken Today?

Despite any arguments that can be mustered from Scripture to refute the claim that tongues have started up again, Pentecostals and Charismatics continue to reply by saying, "Well, how do you explain my experience? I speak in tongues and it makes me feel good. It makes me feel closer to God. I have more power to witness and live for Christ. How do you explain this?"

There are many such testimonies to the impact of tongues. For example:

"What's the use of speaking in tongues?" The only way I can answer that is to say, "What's the use of a bluebird? What is the use of a sunset?" Just sheer, unmitigated uplift, just joy unspeakable and with it health and peace and rest and release from burdens and tensions.

"When I started praying in tongues I felt, and people told me I looked, twenty years younger. . . . I am built up, am given joy, courage, peace, the sense of God's presence; and I happen to be a weak personality who needs this."<sup>1</sup>

This is a powerful sales pitch for convincing a potential buyer that here indeed is a fine product. When tongues can claim to give health and happiness and make you look younger, the potential market is unlimited.

But just how much more power today's tongues speakers have to live for Christ is a matter of subjective opinion. Many former tongues speakers testify that they did not know real

## John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (11 of 13)

176 *The Charismatics*

common explanation for the tongues that are occurring in the Charismatic movement today. It's striking that many of the different tongues speakers use the same terms and sounds. They all generally speak the same way. I've heard it enough so that I could repeat the "words" myself.

In his book *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues*, John Kildahl defined tongues as definitely a learned skill.<sup>3</sup> Kildahl, a clinical psychologist, and his partner Paul Qualben, a psychiatrist, were commissioned by the American Lutheran Church and the National Institute of Mental Health to do a long-range study on tongues. After all their work, they came to the firm conviction that it was nothing more than learned behavior.

A man in our church came to me and admitted that was exactly his situation. He said, "I learned to do it. I'll show you." Then he just started speaking in tongues. Strangely enough, the sounds I heard coming from him were exactly like other tongues I had heard from others; yet the claim is constantly made that each Charismatic is supposed to receive his own "private" prayer language.

I recall visiting a Children of God meeting and listening to one fellow trying to teach another one how to speak in tongues. The "pupil" had just come to Christ and his "teacher" was laboring away industriously in order to have this baby Christian receive "the gift" of tongues. One can understand a Christian learning to improve the use of a spiritual gift, but exactly why a person has to "learn" how to receive a "gift" from the Holy Spirit is unexplainable. Nonetheless the teaching of how to speak in tongues goes on continuously in the Charismatic movement.

On another occasion, researching for this study, I was watching a Charismatic talk show on television; and one person confessed to having spiritual problems. The other one said, "Have you used your tongue every day? Have you spoken in your language every day?"

"Well, no, I haven't," the person admitted.

To which the other one replied, "Well, *that's* your problem. You have to get into it every day, and it doesn't matter how it starts. Just get it started and once you get it started, the Holy Spirit will keep it going."

This conversation is revealing on several counts. For one,

*The Issue of Tongues: Part 2*

177

if the Holy Spirit has given someone the gift of tongues, why does that person have to make an effort to get it started?

Within the Charismatic movement, there is great peer pressure to belong, to perform, to have the same gifts and power that everybody else has. The "answer" to spiritual problems is tongues. It is easy to see why tongues become the great common denominator, the be-all and end-all for everyone involved.

Kildahl and Qualben reported finding the potential for great disillusionment in the practice of tongues. People soon realized that what they were doing is learned behavior. There wasn't anything supernatural. Soon they found themselves facing the same problems and hangups they had always had. According to Kildahl and Qualben, the more sincere a person was when starting to speak in tongues, the more disillusioned he could be when he stopped.

3. *Tongues can be psychological.* Some of the stranger cases of tongues could be explained psychologically. The tongues speaker goes into motor automatism, which is clinically described as radical inward detachment from one's conscious surroundings. Motor automatism results in dissociation of nearly all voluntary muscles from conscious control.

Have you ever watched a newscast that showed young teen-age girls at a rock concert? In the excitement and the emotion, the fervor and the noise, they literally give up voluntary control of their vocal chords and their muscles. They fall to the floor or the ground and just start flopping.

Most people, at one time or another, experience moments when they feel a little detached, a little woozy, and a little faint. Given the right set of conditions, particularly where there is a great deal of fervor and emotion involved as sometimes happens in Charismatic gatherings, a person can easily slip into a state where he is no longer consciously in control, and tongues can easily result.

Also to be considered in this area of the psychological is hypnosis. Kildahl and Qualben stated from their studies that "hypnotizability constitutes the *sine qua non* of the glossolalia experience."<sup>4</sup>

After extensive study of tongues speakers, Kildahl and Qualben concluded that people who were submissive, sugges-

## John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (12 of 13)

*The Issue of Tongues: Part 2*

179

could be quoted directly out of one of the many Charismatic books that offer instructions on how to teach someone to speak in tongues. A person wanting to speak in tongues is to "make some sounds of some kind." He is not to worry about what they are because the "Lord will make a tongue or language out of it." In other words, he is to give up control of what he is saying. It is no wonder that those who have studied glossolalia have concluded that it is a stereotyped pattern of unconsciously controlled vocal behavior which appears under specific emotional conditions.

Charles Smith of Grace Theological Seminary has a helpful chapter in his book *Tongues in Biblical Perspective* which suggests that tongues can be produced by "motor automatism," "psychic catharsis," "collective psyche," "memory excitation," etc.<sup>9</sup> The point is that the occurrence of tongues in itself can have many explanations. It can exist today in the counterfeit form and equally apart from the Holy Spirit as it did in Corinth.

**BUT WHY ARE TONGUES SO POPULAR?**

Despite all the explanations for how tongues occur, Christians from every denomination continue to speak in tongues; and new people "get the gift" every day. Charismatic teachers and writers claim this is the work of the Holy Spirit, that it's a sweeping new burst of power that has come upon the church in the last days.

As we have seen, however, the tongues being spoken today are not biblical. Those who speak in tongues are not practicing the gift described in Scripture. What is the explanation for what they are doing? Why do they pursue this practice with such fervor and why do they seek to subtly (and often not so subtly) convince or intimidate others to start doing the same thing? A basic reason is spiritual hunger. People hear that tongues is the way to have a wonderful spiritual experience. They fear that if they haven't spoken in tongues, they have been missing something. They need this "something more."

Right along with this many people are hungry to express themselves spiritually. They've been coming to church for years, but they really haven't been involved. They haven't been recognized as particularly spiritual or holy; and because

*The Charismatics*

178

tible, and dependent on a leader were those who fell into tongues.<sup>5</sup> William Samarian agreed that "people of a certain type were attached to the kind of religion that used tongues."<sup>6</sup> Obviously, not all tongues speakers would fit into this category, but a great many of them do. They submit to the power of suggestion and do whatever is being suggested. When emotions get high and the pressure mounts, tongues happen.

There is no way to analyze each speaker in tongues and come up with an absolute reason for his behavior. But there are many explanations for tongues, particularly in regard to psychology and learned behavior. Dr. E. Mansell Pattison, a member of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies, said:

The product of our analysis is the demonstration of the very natural mechanisms that produce glossolalia. As a psychological phenomenon, glossolalia is easy to produce and readily understandable. I can add my own observations from clinical experiences with neurological and psychiatric patients. In certain types of brain disorders resulting from strokes, brain tumors, etc., the patient is left with disruptions in his automatic physical speech circuit patterns. If we study these "aphasic" patients we can observe the same decomposition of speech that occurs in glossolalia.

Similar decomposition of speech occurs in schizophrenic thought and speech patterns, which are structurally the same as glossolalia. This data can be understood to demonstrate that the same stereotypes of speech will result whenever conscious, willful control of speech is interfered with, whether by injury to the brain, by psychosis, or by *passive* renunciation by willful control.<sup>7</sup>

To enter into "passive renunciation of willful control" is a general instruction given to any would-be tongues speaker. He is to release himself, give up control of his voice. He is to just say a few words, just let them flow. He doesn't need to think about what he is saying.

Interestingly enough, Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormons, taught his followers to speak in tongues in the following manner: "Rise upon your feet, speak or make some sound and continue to make sounds of some kind and the Lord will make a tongue or language of it."<sup>8</sup>

These instructions from Smith sound like they almost



John F. MacArthur, Jr. "The Issue of Tongues" (13 of 13)

## CHAPTER 15

The Issue of True Spirituality:  
Part 1*What Does It Mean to Be "Spiritual"?*

True spirituality is something all Christians desire—secretly if not openly. One of the greatest attractions of the Charismatic movement is that it promises believers they can be genuinely spiritual in an attractive dynamic way. But while the Charismatics offer one way to become spiritual, the Scriptures appear to teach something else.

## THE ZAPPED AND THE UNZAPPED

For the Charismatic, the way to spirituality is through an ecstatic experience, usually speaking in tongues. The term actually used by some Charismatics is that you should get your "divine zap." People in my congregation tell me that they have talked with Charismatics about spirituality; and when they would admit they had never had this "ecstatic experience," the Charismatic person to whom they were talking would say, "Well, may Jesus zap you."

And so Christianity now has two levels of believers—the zapped and the unzapped. The zapped believe they are at least a bit more spiritual than the unzapped; and like it or not, Christianity is experiencing a dichotomy. Those holding the Charismatic viewpoint are saying in effect that unless you have had "the experience," which they call the baptism of the Spirit with tongues, you have not reached the place where you can function the way God really wants you to function. You are missing something. You are eight cylinders

181

*The Charismatics*

180

they hear that tongues speakers are thought to be holy and spiritual, they try it.

Another explanation is that the Charismatic movement is a reaction to the secularized, mechanized, academic, cold, indifferent society in which we live. The tongues speaker feels like he is directly in touch with the supernatural. Here is something real that he can practically touch. This is not dry and academic. This is reality!

Another basic reason for the growth of tongues is the need for acceptance and security. These people need to be in the "in-group." They want to be among the ones who "have it," and they cringe from the thought of being among the have-nots who are on the outside looking in. It is very satisfying for some to be in the Charismatic movement. It is a form of self-actualization to be able to say, "I am a Charismatic." It makes many people feel they are something, they belong to something, that they have something that others don't have.

Probably the key reason why tongues have exploded on the scene today is a reaction against the cold, lifeless Christianity that is found in many of our churches. The person who joins the Charismatic movement is one who is looking for action, excitement, warmth, and love. He wants to believe that God is really at work in his life—right now and right here. Dead orthodoxy can never satisfy, and that is why many people look for satisfaction in the Charismatic movement.

We can thank God for Charismatic and Pentecostal people who believe in the Word of God. They need to crystallize their view of revelation and study it a bit more carefully, but nonetheless we can be grateful that they believe the Bible and hold it up as authoritative. We can also praise God that they believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, His sacrificial death, His physical resurrection, salvation by faith not works, and the need to live in obedience to Christ and proclaim the faith with zeal.

Some might say, "Why criticize them?" We do so because it is scriptural to be concerned about whether our brothers and sisters are walking in the truth. Although it may not seem very loving to some, the Bible is clear that we are to "speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15). In fact, true love must act on truth.

Wayne A. Grudem, "Why Christians Can Still Prophecy"  
(1 of 5)

For responses (rebuttals) to this article, see pages 23-25 + 80-93

# Why Christians Can Still PROPHECY

*Scripture encourages us to seek this gift yet today.*

**WAYNE A. GRUDEM**

One key difference between many evangelicals and charismatic believers is their attitude toward the gift of prophecy. In charismatic worship, it is not unusual for one or more persons to deliver "a word from the Lord." Some evangelicals believe scripture has ruled out that possibility. Others feel uneasy or just plain skeptical when face to face with someone who claims to speak on God's behalf.

*In the following essay, condensed from the forthcoming book Tough Questions Christians Ask, exegete Wayne Grudem examines what the New Testament says about the gift of prophecy and offers biblical counsel for its use in both charismatic and noncharismatic churches.*

**C**an evangelical Christians use the gift of prophecy in their churches today? What is this spiritual gift, and how does it function? And if we do allow for its use, how can

we guard against abuse and preserve the unique authority of Scripture in our lives?

An examination of the New Testament teaching on this gift will show that it should be defined not as "predicting the future," or "proclaiming a word from the Lord," or "powerful preaching"—but rather as "telling something that God has spontaneously brought to mind." Once we understand prophecy this way, we can allow our churches room to enjoy one of the Holy

PAUL TURNER/ISTOCK



## Wayne A. Grudem, "Why Christians Can Still Prophecy" (2 of 5)

**Why Christians Can Still  
PROPHECY**

Spirit's most edifying gifts.

**Less authority than Scripture**

How did the New Testament church regard the gift of prophecy? Did it have more or less authority than Scripture or apostolic teaching? Let us compare what the two testaments say about prophecy.

Old Testament prophets had an amazing responsibility—to speak and write words that had absolute divine authority. They could say, "Thus says the Lord," and what followed were the very words of God. They wrote their words as God's words in Scripture for all time (see Deut. 18:18–20; Jer. 1:9; Num. 22:38; Ezek. 2:7). Therefore, to disbelieve or disobey a prophet's words was to disbelieve or disobey God (Deut. 18:19; 1 Sam. 8:7; 1 Kings 20:36).

In the New Testament there were also people who could speak and write God's very words and record them as Scripture. However, Jesus no longer called them "prophets," but used a new term, "apostles." The apostles are the New Testament counterpart to the Old Testament prophets (see, for example, Gal. 1:8–9, 11–12; 1 Cor. 2:13; 14:37; 2 Cor. 13:3; 1 Thess. 2:13; 4:8, 15; 2 Pet. 3:2). It is the apostles, not the prophets, who have authority to write the words of New Testament Scripture. And when

the apostles want to establish their unique authority, they never appeal to the title *prophet*, but rather call themselves "apostles" (Rom. 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1).

Why did Jesus use this new term? It was probably because the Greek word *prophētēs* at the time of the New Testament had a very broad range of meanings. It generally did not have the sense of "one who speaks God's very words," but rather "one who speaks on the basis of some external influence" (often a spiritual influence of some kind).

Titus 1:12 uses the word this way, where Paul quotes a pagan poet: "One of their own *prophets* has said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons'" (NIV). The soldiers who mock Jesus also seem to use the word *prophecy* this way, when they blindfold Jesus and demand, "Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?" (Luke 22:64). They do not mean, "Speak words of absolute divine authority," but "Tell us something that has been revealed to you."

Many writings outside the Bible use the Greek word *prophētēs* in this way, without signifying any divine authority in the words of the "prophet." In fact, by the time of the New Testament, the term *prophet* in everyday use often simply meant "one who has supernatural knowledge" or "one who predicts the future"—or even just "spokesman"

(without any connotation of divine authority).

Of course, the words *prophet* and *prophecy* could sometimes be used of the apostles when the context emphasized an external spiritual influence (from the Holy Spirit) under which they spoke (see Rev. 1:3; 22:7; Eph. 2:20; 3:5), but this was not the ordinary terminology used for the apostles, nor did the terms *prophet* and *prophecy* in themselves imply divine authority for their speech or writing.

Much more commonly, *prophet* and *prophecy* were used of ordinary Christians who spoke not with absolute divine authority, but simply to report something God had laid on their hearts or brought to their minds. There are many indications in the New Testament that this ordinary gift of prophecy had authority less than that of the Bible, and even less than that of recognized Bible teaching in the early church.

**Testing the prophecies**

There are clear indications that New Testament prophets did not speak with divine authority. For example, in Acts 21:4, we read of the disciples at Tyre: "Through the Spirit they told Paul not to go on to Jerusalem." This seems to be a reference to prophecy directed towards Paul, but Paul disobeyed it. He never would have done this if this prophecy contained God's very words. <sup>Grudem assumes</sup> ~~Paul acted correctly~~

Then in Acts 21:10–11, Agabus prophesied that the Jews at Jerusalem would "bind Paul and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles," a prediction that was only nearly correct—the Romans, not the Jews, bound Paul (v. 33), and the Jews did not deliver him voluntarily, but tried to kill him, and Paul had to be taken from them by force. Such inaccuracies in detail would have called into question the validity of any Old Testament prophet. <sup>These weren't inaccuracies, for Jesus claimed Paul to be His Jew</sup>

Paul tells the Thessalonians, "Do not despise prophesying, but test everything, hold fast to what is good" (1 Thess. 5:20–21). If prophecy had equalled God's word in authority, he would never have had to tell them not to despise it, for they had "received" and "accepted" God's word "with joy from the Holy Spirit" (1 Thess. 1:6; 2:13; cf. 4:15). But when Paul tells them to "test everything," it must include the prophecies mentioned in the previous phrase. He implies that prophecies contain some things that are good and some that are not when he encourages them to "hold

**Is Prophecy Too Subjective?**

The "gift of prophecy" requires waiting on the Lord, listening for his prompting in our hearts. Christians who are completely evangelical, doctrinally sound, intellectual, and "objective," probably need most the balancing influence of a vital "subjective" relationship with the Lord. And these people are also those who have the least likelihood of being led into error, for they already place great emphasis on solid grounding in the Word of God.

Yet there is an opposite danger of excessive reliance on subjective impressions for guidance, and we must clearly guard against that. People who continually seek subjective messages from God to guide their lives must be cautioned that subjective personal guidance is *not* the main function of New Testament prophecy. They need to place more emphasis on seeking God's sure wisdom written in Scripture.

Many charismatic writers would agree with this caution from Anglican charismatic pastor Michael Harper: "Prophecies which tell other people what they are to do—are to be regarded with great suspicion."

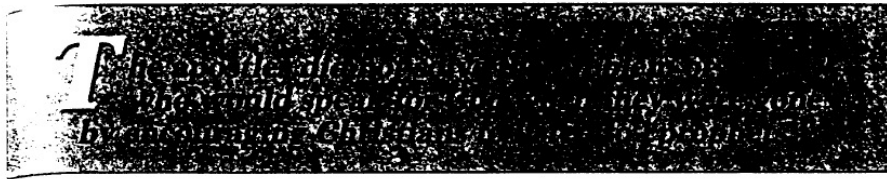
And Donald Gee of the Assemblies of God says, "Many of our errors where spiritual gifts are concerned arise when we want the extraordinary and exceptional to be made the frequent and habitual. Let all who develop excessive desire for 'messages' through the gifts take warning from the wreckage of past generations as well as of contemporaries. . . . The Holy Scriptures are a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path." □

By Wayne A. Grudem.

Argues for too much! —  
Even false prophecies  
have some truth to them.

But OT prophecies also were to be tested for accuracy to determine if they had divine authority. (about 18  
CHRISTIANITY TODAY

## Wayne A. Grudem, "Why Christians Can Still Prophecy" (3 of 5)



just to that which is good." This could never have been said of the words of an Old Testament prophet, or the authoritative teachings of a New Testament apostle.

Moreover, in Acts 21:9, we read that Philip had "four unmarried daughters who prophesied." Whatever we may think about the appropriateness of Bible teaching by women today, this prophesying would be difficult to reconcile with prohibitions against authoritative teaching by women (see 1 Tim. 2:12) if prophecy had absolute divine authority, or even authority greater than or equal to Bible teaching. Similar reasoning applies to 1 Corinthians 11:5 where Paul allows women to prophesy in church even though he later apparently forbids them to speak up publicly during the evaluation or judging of prophecies (1 Cor. 14:34-35).

### Sifting prophecies in Corinth

Let us look more closely at 1 Corinthians 14, where extensive evidence on New Testament prophecy can be found. When Paul says, "Let two or three prophets speak and let the others weigh what is said" (v. 29); he suggests that they should listen carefully and sift the good from the bad. We cannot imagine that an Old Testament prophet like Isaiah would have said, "Listen to what I say and weigh what is said—sort the good from the bad, what you accept from what you should not accept." If prophecy had absolute divine authority, this would have been sin. But here Paul commands that it be done.

In verse 30, Paul allows one prophet to interrupt another one: "If a revelation is made to another sitting by, let the first be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one." If prophets had been speaking God's very words, it is hard to imagine that Paul would say they should be interrupted and not allowed to finish their message.

Paul suggests that no one at Corinth, a church that had much prophecy, was able to speak God's very words. He says in verse 36, "What! Did the word of God come forth from you, or are you the only ones it has reached?"

All these passages indicate that the this only means that prophecy did not originate at Corinth—not that their prophecies were inaccurate! September 16, 1988

### SUMMARY

common idea that prophets spoke "words of the Lord" when the apostles were not present in the early churches is simply incorrect.

There is one other type of evidence that New Testament congregational prophets spoke with less authority than the apostles or Scripture: The apostles did not solve the problem of who would speak for God when they were gone by encouraging Christians to listen to "prophets," but by pointing to Scripture.

So Paul, at the end of his life, emphasizes "rightly handling the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15), and the "God-breathed" character of Scripture "for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). Jude urges his readers to "contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). Peter, at the end of his life, encourages his readers to "pay attention" to Scripture, which is like "a lamp shining in a dark place" (2 Pet. 1:19-20), and reminds them of the teaching of the apostle Paul "in all his letters" (2 Pet. 3:16). In no case do we read exhortations to "give heed to the prophets in your churches" or to "obey the words of the Lord through your prophets."

There certainly were prophets in local congregations after the death of the apostles. But it seems they did not have authority equal to the apostles—and the authors of Scripture knew that.

### Not "the words of God" for today

If the New Testament authors considered congregational prophecies to be sometimes flawed and definitely less authoritative than either Scripture or apostolic teaching, we in the church today should consider prophecy to be merely human words, not God's words, and not equal to God's words in authority. But does this conclusion conflict with current charismatic teaching or practice? I think it conflicts with much charismatic practice, but not with most charismatic teaching.

Most charismatic teachers today would agree that contemporary prophecy is not equal to Scripture in authority. Though some speak of prophecy as being the "word of God" for today, there

Therefore, prophecy is "telling human words (sometimes flawed ones) that God has spontaneously brought to mind" (cf. p. 124 definition)? This is a very low view of prophecy

is almost uniform testimony from all segments of the charismatic movement that prophecy is imperfect and impure, and will contain elements that are not to be obeyed or trusted.

For example, Bruce Yocum, author of a charismatic book on prophecy, writes, "Prophecy can be impure—our own thoughts or ideas can get mixed into the message we receive—whether we receive the words directly or only receive a sense of the message. . . . (Paul says that all our prophecy is imperfect.)"

But it must be said that in actual practice much confusion results from the habit of prefacing prophecies with the Old Testament phrase "Thus says the Lord" (a phrase not used by any recorded prophets in New Testament churches). This is unfortunate, because it gives the impression that the words that follow are God's very words, whereas most responsible charismatic spokesmen would not want to claim it for every part of their prophecies anyway. There would be much gain and no loss if that phrase were dropped.

If someone really does think God is bringing something to mind that should be reported in the congregation, there is nothing wrong with saying, "I think the Lord is putting on my mind that . . ." or some similar expression. Of course, that does not sound as forceful as "Thus says the Lord," but if it is really from God, the Holy Spirit will cause it to speak with great power to the hearts of those who need to hear.

If prophecy does not contain God's very words, then in what sense is it a gift from God?

Paul indicates that God could bring something spontaneously to mind so that the person prophesying would report it in his or her own words. Paul calls this a "revelation": "If a revelation is made to another sitting by, let the first be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged" (1 Cor. 14:30-31).

Paul is simply referring to something that God may bring to mind or impress on someone's heart in such a way that

(continued on page 34)

No, 1 Cor 13:10 says prophecy is partial, which is not the same as inaccurate. It does not include the truth in mind of God.

An argument from silence

God was

N.W. Graham begins to redefine "revelation" as well.



## Wayne A. Grudem, "Why Christians Can Still Prophecy" (4 of 5)

# Why Christians Can Still PROPHECY

(continued from page 31)

the person has a sense that it is from God. It may be that the thought is surprisingly distinct from the person's own train of thought, or accompanied by a sense of urgency or persistence.

Thus, if a stranger comes in and all prophesy, "the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you" (1 Cor. 14:25). I heard a report of this happening in a clearly noncharismatic Baptist church in America: A missionary speaker paused in the middle of his message and said something like this: "I didn't plan to say this, but it seems the Lord is indicating that someone in this church has just walked out on his wife and family. If that is so, let me tell you that God

wants you to return to them and learn to follow God's pattern for family life." The missionary did not know it, but in the unlit balcony sat a man who had entered the church for the first time just moments before. The description fit him exactly, and he made himself known, acknowledged his sin, and began to seek after God. OK, but why must this be called a "prophecy"?

In this way, prophecy serves as a "sign" for believers (1 Cor. 14:22)—a clear demonstration that God is at work in their midst. And since it will work for the conversion of unbelievers as well, Paul encourages this gift to be used when "unbelievers or outsiders enter" (1 Cor. 14:23).

Many of us have experienced or heard of similar events: For example, an unplanned but urgent request may have

been given to pray for certain missionaries. Much later those who prayed discovered that just at that time the missionaries had been in an auto accident or at a point of intense spiritual conflict, and had needed those prayers. Paul would call the intuition of those things a "revelation," and the report to the assembled church of that prompting from God, a "prophecy." It may have elements of the speaker's own understanding in it, and it certainly needs to be tested; yet it is of value in the church.

## The benefits of prophecy

Prophecy in the New Testament is not merely "predicting the future." There were some predictions (Acts 11:28; 21:11), but there was also the disclosure of sins (1 Cor. 14:25). In fact, anything that edified could have been included, for Paul says, "He who prophesies speaks to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation" (1 Cor. 14:3). Here is another indication of the value of prophecy: It could speak to the needs of people's hearts in a spontaneous, direct way.

At two significant points in our marriage, my wife, Margaret, and I visited and prayed with Christian friends in another part of the United States. On both occasions, during our time of prayer, the husband of the family paused and spoke a sentence directly to Margaret. On both occasions, the messages hit home and brought the Lord's comfort regarding deep concerns we had not mentioned at all. Here is the value of prophecy for "upbuilding and encouragement and consolation." THIS WAS THE POINT

There is another great benefit of prophecy: It provides opportunity for everyone in the congregation to participate, not just those who are skilled speakers or who have gifts of teaching. Paul says he wants all the Corinthians to prophesy (1 Cor. 14:5). And he says, "You can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged" (v. 31). Greater openness to the gift of prophecy could help cure the malaise in our churches where many are mere spectators. Perhaps we contribute to the problem of spectator Christianity by quenching the work of the Spirit in this area. THIS TEACHING OF GRUDEM'S CONTRADICTS 1 COR. 12:29

## Until the Lord comes

Many evangelicals claim that gifts such as prophecy were given to the church for the apostolic age only. The apostle Paul, on the other hand, expected proph-

## Prophecy and Teaching: What's the Difference?

New Testament prophecy was based on spontaneous promptings from the Holy Spirit (compare Acts 11:28; 21:4, 10–11; and note also the ideas of prophecy that are represented in Luke 7:39; 22:63–64; John 4:19; 11:51).

By contrast, no human speech that is called "teaching" is ever said to be based on a revelation in the New Testament. Rather, teaching is often simply an explanation or application of Scripture (Acts 15:35; 11:12, 26; Rom. 2:21; 15:4; Col. 3:16; Heb. 5:12) or a repetition and explanation of apostolic instructions (Rom. 16:17; 2 Tim. 2:2; 3:10). It is what we would call "Bible teaching" or "preaching" today.

Although a few people have claimed that the prophets in New Testament churches gave "charismatically inspired" interpretations of Scripture, it is hard to find any convincing examples in the New Testament where the "prophet" word group is used to refer to someone interpreting Scripture.

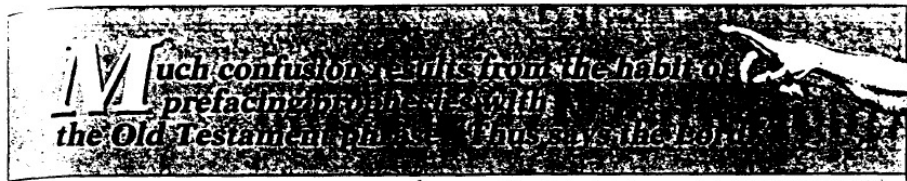
Prophecy has less authority than teaching, and prophecies in the church are always to be subject to the authoritative teaching of Scripture. The Thessalonians were not told to hold firm to the traditions that were "prophesied" to them but to the traditions they were "taught" by Paul (2 Thess. 2:15). It was teachers, not prophets, who gave leadership and direction to the early churches. NE. ACTS 13:1 MENTIONS PROPHETS FIRST, THEN INDICATING THEIR PLACED SECOND

Among the elders, therefore, were "those who labor in the word and teaching" (1 Tim. 5:17), and an elder was to be "an apt teacher" (1 Tim. 3:2; cf. Titus 1:9). But nothing is said about any elders whose work was prophesying. In his leadership, Timothy was to take heed to himself and to his "teaching" (1 Tim. 4:16), but he was never told to take heed to his prophesying. James warned that those who *teach*, not those who prophesy, will be judged with greater strictness (Jas. 3:1).

The distinction is clear: If a message is the result of conscious reflection on the text of Scripture, containing interpretation and application to life, then it is *teaching*. But if a message is the report of something God brings suddenly to mind, then it is a *prophecy*. Of course, even prepared teachings can be interrupted by unplanned additional material the teacher suddenly feels God is bringing to his mind. This would be a teaching with prophecy mixed in.

By Wayne A. Grudem.

## Wayne A. Grudem, "Why Christians Can Still Prophecy" (5 of 5)



ecy to continue until the Lord returns.

Paul says, "Our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away" (1 Cor. 13:9-10). So he says that prophecy will pass away at a certain time, namely, "when the perfect comes." But when is that? It has to be when the Lord returns, because it has to be the same time indicated by the word *then* in verse 12: "Now we see in a mirror dimly, but *then* face to face. Now I know in part; *then* I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood." Face to face is an Old Testament phrase for seeing God personally (see Gen. 32:30; Exod. 33:11; Deut. 5:4; 34:10; Judg. 6:22; Ezek. 20:35—the only Old Testament occurrences of this phrase, and they all refer to seeing God). The time when I shall know "as I have been known" also must refer to the Lord's return.

Some have argued that "when the perfect comes" refers to the time when the New Testament canon is complete. (Revelation, the last book to be written, was composed at the latest about 35 years after 1 Corinthians.) But would the Corinthians ever have understood that from what Paul wrote? Is there any mention of a collection of New Testament books anywhere in the context of 1 Corinthians 13? Such an idea is foreign to the context. Moreover, such a statement would not fit Paul's purpose. Would it be persuasive to argue as follows: "We can be sure that love will never end, for we know that it will last more than 35 years!"? This would hardly be convincing. The context requires rather that Paul be contrasting this age with the age to come, and saying that love will endure into eternity.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones observes that the view that makes "when the perfect comes" equal the time of the completion of the New Testament encounters another difficulty: "It means that you and I, who have the Scriptures open before us, know much more than the apostle Paul of God's truth. . . . It means that we are altogether superior . . . even to the apostles themselves, including the apostle Paul! It means that we are now in a position in which . . . 'we know, even as also we are known' by

But why would four thousand of believers be such big supporters of a view that does not fit the context? The only way to explain this is to suppose that they were misled by a popular error.

God. . . . Indeed, there is only one word to describe such a view, it is nonsense."

The conclusion is that in 1 Corinthians 13:10 Paul says that prophecy will continue in the church until Christ returns.

Paul valued this gift so highly that he told the Corinthians, "Make love your aim, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophecy" (1 Cor. 14:1). Then, at the end of his discussion of spiritual gifts, he said again, "So, my brethren, earnestly desire to prophecy" (1 Cor. 14:39). And he said, "He who prophesies edifies the church" (1 Cor. 14:4).

If Paul was eager for the gift of prophecy to function at Corinth, troubled as the church was by immaturity, selfishness, and divisions, then should we not also actively seek this valuable gift in our congregations today? We evangelicals who profess to believe and obey *all* that Scripture says, should we not also believe and obey this? And might a greater openness to the gift of prophecy perhaps help to correct a dangerous imbalance in our church lives, lives that are too often exclusively intellectual, objective, and narrowly doctrinal?

### A cautious approach

All Christians who desire to use the gift of prophecy in their churches, but especially pastors and others who have teaching responsibilities, would be wise to take several steps:

- Pray seriously for the Lord's wisdom on how and when to approach this subject in the church.
- Teach on this subject, if you have teaching responsibilities, in the regular Bible teaching times that the church already provides.
- Be patient and proceed slowly—church leaders should not be "domineering" (1 Pet. 5:3), and a patient approach will avoid frightening people or alienating them unnecessarily.
- Recognize and encourage the gift of prophecy in ways it has already been functioning—at church prayer meetings, for example, when someone has felt unusually led by the Spirit to pray for something, or when it has seemed that the Spirit was bringing to mind a hymn

or Scripture passage, or giving a common sense of the focus of a time of group worship.

Even Christians in churches not open to prophecy can be sensitive to promptings from the Holy Spirit regarding what to pray for in church prayer meetings, and can then express those promptings in the form of a prayer.

- If the first four steps have been followed, and if the congregation and its leadership will accept it, make opportunities for the gift of prophecy in the less formal worship services of the church, such as Sunday evenings, Wednesday prayer meetings, or smaller house groups. If this is allowed, those who prophecy should be kept within Scriptural guidelines (1 Cor. 14:29-36), should genuinely seek the edification of the church and not their own prestige (1 Cor. 14:12, 26), and should not dominate the meeting or be overly dramatic in their speech (and thus attract attention to themselves rather than to the Lord). Prophecies should be evaluated according to the teachings of Scripture.

- If the gift of prophecy begins to be used in your church, place even more emphasis on the vastly superior value of Scripture as the place where Christians can always go to hear the voice of the living God. Prophecy is a valuable gift, but it is in Scripture that God speaks to us his very words today. Rather than hoping at every worship service that the highlight will be some word of prophecy, those who use the gift of prophecy need to be reminded that we should focus our expectation of hearing from God toward the Bible, and we should delight in God himself as he speaks through the Bible. And rather than seeking frequent guidance through prophecy, we should emphasize that it is in Scripture that we are to find guidance for our lives. □

Wayne A. Grudem is associate professor of biblical and systematic theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois. He is the author of *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today* (Crossway) and *1 Peter in the Tyndale New Testament Commentary* (Eerdmans).



## Basic Issues in 1 Corinthians 12

A Completed Handout of Page 2

1) **What** are spiritual gifts?

- a) "Divinely given capacities to perform useful functions for God, especially in the area of spiritual service... to contribute to the welfare of the church as a whole, as well as to bear an effective witness to the world" (Walvoord, *The Holy Spirit at Work Today*, 38).
- b) "A God-given ability for service" (Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 83).
- c) "A spiritual capacity for development" (Radmacher, "Spiritual Gifts" tape series, Campus Crusade for Christ).
- d) "The manifestation of the Spirit for the common good (of the church)" (1 Cor. 12:7).

Note: Spiritual Gifts are *Not* :

- a) Place of Service: The gift is the ability *not* where that ability is exercised.
- b) Age Group Ministry: Spiritual gifts are not abilities working with certain age groups. It's the ability, not *who* benefits from it!
- c) Natural Talents: Writing, Christian Education, and music are manifestations of spiritual gifts such as exhortation, teaching and service.

2) **Who** has spiritual gifts? Who gives spiritual gifts? Who decides the gift for each person?

- a) Every Christian (and only Christians) has a spiritual gift (vv. 7, 11, 18).
- b) The Holy Spirit gives the gifts (vv. 4, 7-9, 11, 18).
- c) The Holy Spirit decides which gift each believer receives (vv. 7, 8, 10, 11).

The Involvement of the Whole Trinity (vv. 4-6):

God the **Spirit** gives (distributes) the spiritual gifts (v. 4)

God the **Son** assigns the place of the ministry of the gifts (v. 5)

God the **Father** gives the energy operative through the gifts in the place of ministry (v. 6)  
(Radmacher, "Spiritual Gifts" tape, Campus Crusade for Christ)

3) **Where** are the spiritual gifts to be used?

They are to be used in the church ("for the common good," v. 7) which ultimately equips the church for effective witness to the world (cf. Eph. 4:11).

4) **When** do Christians receive their spiritual gifts? (Must be deduced from vv. 7, 11, and 18)

Since every Christian has a gift (vv. 7, 11, 18) they must be received at salvation.

5) **Why** are spiritual gifts given?

Gifts are given for ministry to the other members of the body (v. 7; cf. 1 Cor. 14:26b).

## Distinguishing Natural Talents from Spiritual Gifts

A Completed Handout of Page 2

	Natural Talents	Spiritual Gifts
Who has them?	Christians and Non-Christians	Christians only
How are they obtained?	Self-discipline, hard work	Given by the Holy Spirit by grace
When are they obtained?	Innate or acquired since birth	Acquired at salvation
Who benefits from them?	All people: Christians and Non-Christians	The church, which in turn benefits all men

*The Real Issue: Does it really make any difference whether a believer thinks his ability is a natural talent or a spiritual gift? (Yes and No)*

**Yes :** We shouldn't add to God's Word by calling an ability a "spiritual gift" if the Bible doesn't call it a gift, but . . .

**No:** Both natural talents and spiritual gifts are:  
1) given **from** God, and  
2) to be used **for** God!!



## The Basis and Nature of Spiritual Gifts

### Greek Words Relating to Spiritual Gifts

A Completed Handout of Page 3

- 1) **Charisma** (χάρισμα) is the most popular word for spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 1:7; 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6; 1 Pet. 4:10)  
Translations: "gift" or "spiritual gift" (1 Tim 4:14 only), but literally means "gifts of grace."

Roots: **charis** means "grace" (The basis of receiving our spiritual gifts is grace)  
**char** means "joy" (The result of exercising our spiritual gift is joy)

Other uses of the word *charisma* in the New Testament (Vine):

- gift of salvation (Rom. 5:15, 16; 6:23; 11:29)
  - truth which is imparted through human instruction (Rom. 1:11)
  - celibacy and marriage (1 Cor. 7:7)
  - gracious deliverances in answer to the prayers of fellow believers (2 Cor. 1:11)
- 2) **Diakonia** (διακονία) refers to a place of service (1 Cor. 12:5) & category of gifts (1 Pet. 4:11).  
Translations: "service" (NIV), "ministries" (NASB)
- 3) **Energema** (ἐνέργημα) concerns the energy operating through the gifts (1 Cor. 12:6; Rom. 12:3)  
Translations: "working" (NIV), "effects" (NASB)
- 4) **Phanerosis** (φανέρωσις) denotes the evidence of the Spirit in believers (1 Cor. 12:7).  
Translations: "manifestation" (NASB, NIV)  
Infinitive: **phaneroein** (φανερόειν) "to make visible or known"  
Secular Usage: "disclosure, announcement" (BAGD; cf. 2 Cor. 4:2)
- 5) **Pneumatikoi** (πνευματικοί) refers to the Spirit as the Source of gifts (1 Cor. 12:1; 14:1)  
Translations: "spiritual gifts" (NASB), but a more literal translation would be "spiritual things," "things of the Spirit," or simply "spirituals"  
Root: **pneuma** (πνεῦμα) "Spirit"
- 6) **Doma** (δῶμα) is a gift given by Christ only to the church after His Ascension (Eph. 4:7-8, 11), not during the Old Testament (i.e., only Christians have gifts, not Old Testament saints).

## Why Study and Know Our Gifts?

- 1) **MINISTRY TO THE CHURCH BODY** - Ministering in the area of our gifts results in:
  - a) edification of the body—Unity and interdependency (1 Cor. 14:12).
  - b) mobilizing the church for mission to a lost world.
  - c) encouraging other believers to discern and develop their gifts.
- 2) **PERSONAL FULFILLMENT** - Exercising our gifts results in:
  - a) ministering in areas of strength, reducing frustration and wasted time.
  - b) assisting us in establishing priorities for study, growth, and ministry (Eph. 4:13).
  - c) a sense of usefulness and belonging in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:14-17).
- 3) **OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD** - Scripture gives several commands relating to gifts:
  - a) "Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you..." (1 Tim 4:14a).
  - b) "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware" (1 Cor. 12:1).
  - c) "And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given us, let us exercise them accordingly..." (Rom. 12:6a).
  - d) "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 4:10).

## Dangers Associated with Spiritual Gifts

### Attitudes and Actions to Avoid

A Completed Handout of Page 13

- 1) Division resulting from comparison and competition.
  - a) Viewing your gift as unimportant (problem = inferiority).  
i.e., "My gift is not like yours!" (1 Cor. 12:15-16)
  - b) Viewing your gift as superior (problem = pride).  
i.e., "Your gift is not like mine!" (1 Cor. 12:21)
- 2) Confusion with natural talents.
- 3) Seeking sign (controversial) gifts and neglecting ministering gifts.
- 4) Seeking "up-front" ministering gifts while neglecting "behind the scenes" ministering gifts.
- 5) Willing to be ignorant of gifts because of the subject's complexity and the varying views of respected scholars (1 Cor. 12:1).
- 6) Focusing upon gifts as a more significant evidence of the Holy Spirit than the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).  
"Doing" overemphasized to the neglect of "being."  
"Service" overemphasized to the neglect of "character."
- 7) Rejecting opportunities for service in "non-gifted" areas because you don't have that particular gift which would make the service easier on you (2 Tim 4:5).
- 8) Supposing that spiritual gifts are rewards for service, for holiness, for sincerity, for maturity, or for anything else!
- 9) Believing that there is any correspondence between spiritual gifts and spirituality.
- 10) Supposing that God has withdrawn your spiritual gift because He has not chosen to use it at the present time.  
"For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:29)
- 11) Seeking gifts and overlooking the importance of love (Rom. 12:9ff.; 1 Cor. 13:1ff.).  
"By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35 NASB).



## Ministry Opportunities at First Baptist Church of Yucaipa

Scripture teaches that God has gifted each member of this church body with a spiritual gift "for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:7). This, of course, implies that each of us would benefit the church most when we function primarily in a ministry which employs these strong traits. Isn't this true for you? Why not consider some of the current needs in these areas right now?

Related to this gift ...	our church has these openings ...	so talk to ...	at ...
<b>Teaching</b>	Sunday School Teachers	Wendell Duke	797-6986
<b>Evangelism</b>	Evangelism Explosion Ministry	Walt Plumb	793-5252
<b>Pastor-Teacher</b>	Sunday School Teachers Boy's Brigade Leader Pioneer Girls Leader	Wendell Duke Greg Franklin Connie Geshay	797-6986 795-5085 795-1209
<b>Exhortation</b>	Phoning ministry for College/Career	Donna Strange	795-4662
<b>Administration</b>	Planning for College/Career Activities Children's Church Ministry Coordinator Sunday School Department Head Bus Ministry Coordinator	Doug Strange Martha Amistadi Wendell Duke Steve Woodard	795-4662 795-5578 797-6986 790-1971
<b>Faith</b>	Start a College/Career Ensemble	John Withem	790-1971
<b>Giving</b>	General Fund/Missions	Kurt Ahlstrom	790-1971
<b>Service</b>	College/Career Class refreshments Choir Director for children's choirs Handbell Choir Director Sing in College/Career Ensemble	Iva Gier John Withem John Withem John Withem	881-4010 790-1971 790-1971 790-1971
<b>Showing Mercy</b>	Visitation ministry to hospitalized youth	Ivah Zapp	790-1971

## Spiritual Gifts Inventory Group Record

**Directions:** After completing the Spiritual Gifts Inventory and the Spiritual Gifts Inventory Worksheet, please print your name and record your personal gift ratings for each gift below. Then circle those ratings of the gifts which you think may be your own spiritual gifts.

	Teaching	Evang.	Pastor-Teacher	Exhort.	Admin.	Faith	Giving	Service	Mercy
<b>Example:</b> Rick Griffith	1	6	2	3	2	8	4	5	7
1 Susan Griffith	4	6	7	3	8	5	4	1	2
2 Doug Strange	1	8	4	3	1	2	7	5	6
3 Donna Strange	2	8	3	1	1	5	7	6	4
4 Steve Gier	1	6	5	3	4	7	4	4	2
5 Iva Gier	3	4	2	3	1	6	7	6	5
6 Jim Raube	3	8	5	4	1	7	2	5	6
7 Margy Raube	1	6	2	3	7	8	2	5	4
8 Lonnie Looyesen	7	9	5	3	2	6	8	1	4
9 Doug Sandburg	6	8	5	5	2	7	4	1	3
10 Brad Flater	8	9	4	6	3	2	1	5	7
11 Tom Caylor	2	5	2	3	8	4	6	7	1
12 James Jensen	4	2	1	3	5	6	4	7	1
13 Ted Evans	1	3	1	5	6	6	7	4	2
14 Rick Welles	1	9	8	6	3	5	2	4	7
15 Tim. Poole	7	8	3	6	1	5	2	5	4
16 Bob Gibbs	3	7	4	4	2	6	2	1	5
17 Matt Anderson	7	7	4	6	2	3	4	1	5
18 Kylene Franklin	7	6	3	4	2	7	5	1	4
19 Chris Morgret	4	7	3	4	6	2	5	4	1
20 Debbie Anderson	4	5	3	2	3	6	7	2	1
21 Brie Mosquetta	4	6	5	4	3	5	4	2	1
22 Debbie Gibbs	1	8	6	4	2	4	5	2	1
<b>Class Totals</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
	Teaching	Evang.	Pastor-Teacher	Exhort.	Admin.	Faith	Giving	Service	Mercy