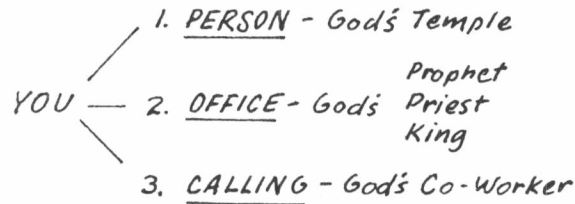


Lesson #8 - The Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Introduction

- A. A Biblical study of the provision of God for His people leads one not only to thanksgiving, but more particularly, to a deep awareness of the extent of God's loving kindness. No area of life has been left out.
- B. The subject before us fits into that category. God has made every provision for all of the demands of the daily life and service.
- C. All of this reminds us again of the promise that He will supply our needs (II Cor. 9:8; Phil. 4:19), work everything together for our good (Rom. 8:28), and manifest Himself in our lives with divine power (Rom. 1:16; I Thess. 1:5).
- D. It is an encouragement to know that God has designed and given gifts to each of us as believers. This is a testimony in itself that He cares for us and desires to fill our lives with His joy by using us for His glory.



I. The New Testament Use of the Word "Gift".

- A. There are gifts that emphasize the nature of that which is given.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is **the gift of God**, Not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph. 2:8,9

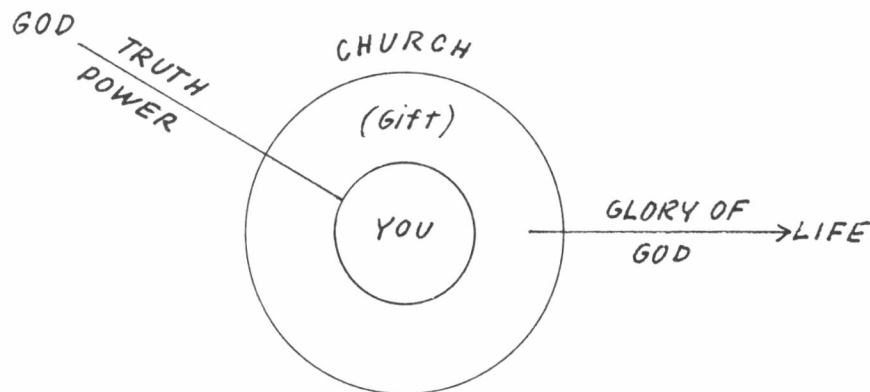
- B. There are gifts that emphasize the freedom with which the gifts were given.

Jesus answered and said unto her (the woman at the well), **If Thou knewest the gift of God**, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. John 4:10

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, and **ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost**. Acts 2:38

- C. There are gifts that emphasize the sovereignty of God in bestowing the gifts.

God also bearing them witness, both **with signs** and **wonders**, and with divers **miracles**, and **gifts of the Holy Ghost**, according to His own will. Hebrews 2:4



D. There are gifts that emphasize the enablement which the gift produces.

So that **ye came behind in no gift**, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 1:7

Now there are **diversities of gifts**, but the same Spirit. I Cor. 12:4

To another faith by the same Spirit, to another **the gifts of healing** by the same Spirit. I Corinthians 12:9

Observation: All of these verses emphasize the goodness of God to each of us. He has freely bestowed upon us unusual benefits that we will enjoy forever. In this lesson we are particularly concerned with those gifts which enable us to serve Him. These are usually called "charismatic gifts". The reason for this is the use of that Greek word (charis) which designates certain enablements which God has given to us so that we may honor and glorify Him.

## II. The Early Church and the Gifts of God.

A. The Lord Jesus promised unusual ability to His Church in the gift of the Holy Spirit, Acts. 1:8.

**But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto Me** both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Observation: The Church (the Body of Christ) which was born on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), was not only brought into existence by the Holy Spirit, but was also given a supernatural ability to fulfill the Great Commission. A part of this divine enablement, given largely to the leaders of the church, was manifested in a variety of miracles. Other unusual gifts were also evident in the Early Church. There were gifts related to mercy (healing), leadership (apostles, ruling, government), communication of new truth (prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues), evangelism (evangelism), and church growth (wisdom, helps, teaching, faith, knowledge).

B. The evidence of divine enablement in the Early Church.

1. The miracles performed by the Lord Jesus Christ validated Him as the Son of God, John 20:30, 31.

And many **other signs** (miracles) truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book,

**But these are written, that ye might believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name.

Observation: By this explanation we understand how the miracles in the life of our Savior were a part of divine revelation. It was the Father's testimony that the Lord Jesus was really His Son.

But I have a **greater witness** than that of John, for **the works** which the Father hath given Me to finish, **the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me.** John 5:36

2. The unusual gifts in the Early Church validated the church leaders as men of God.

And by the hands of the Apostles were **many signs and wonders** wrought among the people... and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.

Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them...and **they were healed every one.** Acts 5:12-16

Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, **because of the grace that is given to me of God . . .**

**Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God,** so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum **I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.** Romans 15:15, 19

Truly **the signs of an apostle** were wrought among you in all patience, **in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.** II Cor. 12:12

Observation: This ability, bestowed upon these church leaders by the Holy Spirit, was a divine evidence that they were men of God and had been sent by God to do the work they were doing. The new movement (the Church) which they represented was not at all like the Old Testament Theocracy. It had no special priesthood, no special building, no special locality, no special racial people, and no special ceremonies. Because of this, only indisputable divine gifts and miracles would convince the people that it was from God.

3. The unusual gifts in the Early Church validated the revelation given by these men as the very Word of God.

Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which **gave testimony unto the word of His grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.** Acts 14:3

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation (the message of salvation), which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was **confirmed unto us** by them that heard Him.

**God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost,** according to His own will? Hebrews 2:3, 4

Observation: From these verses we see how God, in His infinite wisdom, made it clear that the messages which came through the church leaders were really from Him. To Jewish believers particularly it would be difficult to accept the new revelation in that it taught how the Old Testament ceremonial law and priesthood was to be abolished. God put His stamp upon the Early Church, its leaders, and His Word through the giving of divine gifts and abilities.

C. The testimony of these gifts to the Early Church herself.

1. On the Day of Pentecost the gift of the Holy Spirit was promised to all believers.

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and **ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.** Acts 2:38

Observation: Many years before the promise had been given through the prophet Joel (2:28, 29), that the Holy Spirit would be given equally to all believers. On the Day of Pentecost that promise was at least partially fulfilled. The significance of this was far-reaching. Up to now the Kingdom was Jewish and among the Jews there was the rigid distinction between the priesthood, the Jewish men, the Jewish women, and the Gentiles. All of that appeared to be abolished in the coming of the Holy Spirit.

2. There were three additional times when a similar "Pentecost" came to pass.

- a. The gift of the Holy Spirit upon the Samaritans, Acts 8:12-17.

Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that **Samaria had received the word of God,** they sent unto them Peter and John.

Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.

For as yet He was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Then laid they their hands on them, and **they received the Holy Ghost.**

- b. The gift of the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius, Acts 10:44-48.

While Peter yet spake these words, **the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.**

Then they of the circumcision (Jews) which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, **because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

**For they heard them speak with tongues,** and magnify God. Then answered Peter.

Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, **which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?**

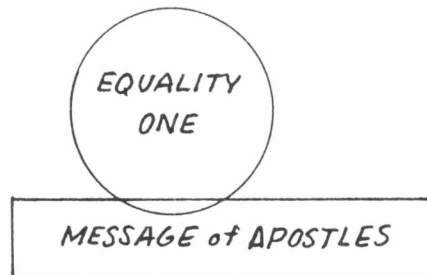
- c. The gift of the Holy Spirit upon the people at Ephesus, Acts 19:1-7.

He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost...

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them **the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.**

Observations:

1. Why did God give the Holy Spirit to three different groups of people as He had earlier done so at Pentecost?
2. It would appear that there were three reasons.
  - a. To indicate clearly that the Apostles were His designated leaders of the new movement—the Church. In each of these three instances the gift of the Holy Spirit came through one or two of the leading Apostles.
  - b. To emphasize that the Church was non-racial. All of this was a clear demonstration of equality of all believers in the Church. The Samaritans and the Gentiles were given equal standing and acceptance in the Church, by God Himself, through the gift of the Holy Spirit.
  - c. To teach the unity of the Church. If the Holy Spirit had come only upon the people at Jerusalem—every other geographical locality would have become second-rate. God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit at three different times and places—with the Apostles present—and with an identical manifestation as at Pentecost—to emphasize that the Church was one.



D. The enumeration of the gifts of God.

I Corinthians 12:8-10

1. Wisdom
2. Knowledge
3. Faith
4. Healing
5. Miracles
6. Prophecy
7. Discerning of spirits
8. Tongues
9. Interpretation of tongues

Romans 12:3-8

1. Prophecy
2. Ministry
3. Teachers
4. Exhortation
5. Giving
6. Ruling
7. Mercy

I Corinthians 12:28-30

1. Apostles
2. Prophets
3. Teachers
4. Miracles
5. Healing
6. Helps
7. Governments
8. Tongues
9. Interpretation of tongues

Ephesians 4:7-11

1. Apostles
2. Prophets
3. Evangelists
4. Pastor-teachers

E. The instruction regarding the temporary nature of some of these gifts.

Charity never faileth, but whether there be prophecies, they shall **fail**, whether there be tongues, they shall **cease**, whether there be knowledge, it shall **vanish away**. I Cor. 13:8

Observation: This verse clearly states a cessation of the unusual "charismatic" gifts (miracles, healing, prophecy, apostleship, wisdom, knowledge, discerning of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues). By this it is not meant that God no longer heals or performs miracles for His people. The distinction here must be made between healers and healing, between miracle workers and miracles. We no longer have the former but will always have the latter.

### III. The Gifts of God and Their Use Today.

A. Every believer has received a gift or gifts related to the person of the Holy Spirit.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according **as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith...**

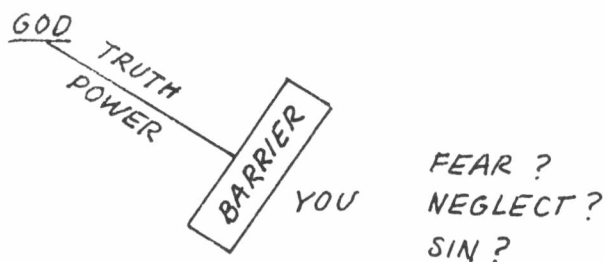
Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us.... Romans 12:3, 6

Now there are **diversities of gifts**, but the same Spirit...

But the manifestation of the Spirit is **given to every man** to profit withal (the common good). I Cor. 12:4, 7

But **unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.** Ephesians 4:7

Observation: All of these verses testify to the great truth that every believer has been given divine enablement to live and serve for the glory of God. These gifts are inseparably related to the person and work of our "Helper", the blessed Holy Spirit. One very important part of His work is to enable us to use our gift or gifts successfully.



B. Every believer has received a gift or gifts related to the person of the Holy Spirit—for the edifying of the Church.

But **unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ...**

And **He gave some**, apostles, and some, prophets, and some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers,

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, **for the edifying of the body of Christ...**

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and **compactd by that which every joint supplieth**, according to the effectual working in **the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.** Ephesians 4:7, 11, 12, 16

Observation: It is overwhelming when we see how God has united us together in His Church with various gifts so that we may glorify Him in being a spiritual help to one another. The illustration Paul utilizes is that of the physical body. As our body has many members which are all interdependent in support and care so every believer is to give and receive spiritual benefit within the body.

It is right in this area that many of us fail to do the will of God. You have a least one gift and God expects you to use it. Learn to give your testimony, join a weekly Bible class, participate in giving a mini-retreat with a group of friends, and most of all, become involved in some vital work of your local Church. You should be giving and receiving on a regular basis.

C. Every believer has received a gift or gifts related to the person of the Holy Spirit—for the edifying of the Church—and to utilize as a steward of the grace of God.

**As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God, if any man minister, let him do it as of **the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified** through Jesus Christ, to Whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. I Peter 4:10, 11

Observation: A steward is one to whom certain resources have been given for the benefit of others. The Christian is called a "steward" in that we have gifts, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, which may be used to bring the grace of God into the lives of those to whom we minister. This may have to do with salvation, through giving out the Word, or the meeting of almost any spiritual need in the life of fellow believers.

#### **IV. The Biblical Emphasis Regarding the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.**

**But covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way...**

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, **and have not charity**, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And **now abideth faith, hope, charity**, these three, **but the greatest of these is charity**. I Corinthians 12:31; 13:1, 13

Observations:

1. Although there are many passages in the New Testament which speak of the believer's gifts and how we are to use these divine enablements for the glory of God—the emphasis is on love.
2. When Paul gave the qualifications for spiritual leaders, he did not speak of gifts, but spiritual maturity. (I Timothy 3:1-12; II Timothy 2:2; Titus 1:5-9)
3. It is important for us to realize that the key to being used of God is something more valuable than spiritual gifts—it is being the kind of a person whose daily life is characterized by love, faith, and hope. (I Thess. 1:3)
4. The message of the New Testament is clear—we all have spiritual gifts. However, the key to a joyful and fruitful life is found in the virtues of spiritual maturity. All of us need put more emphasis here. We must seek a deeper and growing experience of what it means to be people of love, of faith, and of hope.

#### **Conclusion:**

- A. We must thank God for the gifts that He has given us. The way we can put that thanksgiving into practice is to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in reaching out to people with our gifts.
- B. We must daily depend upon the Holy Spirit to teach us how to live a life characterized by love, faith, and hope.