

# UNWRAPPING YOUR PRESENTS FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT

## Part Three

### I. REFRESHER ON THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

#### A. The initial and continual filling of the Holy Spirit:

1. What a Holy Spirit filled individual is: "A Holy Spirit filled person is a born-again believer who is hungry and disciplined to study, understand, and wisely implement what he is being taught from God's Word. This in turn, triggers rapid spiritual growth. (See *1 Pet. 2:2*) With a sense of urgency, he eagerly addresses anything that would hinder the Spirit from daily producing Christ's character in his life or Christ's ministry through his life. By faith, he places every area of his life under Christ's complete Lordship, so that ministry occurs through him, beyond what is humanly possible. (See *Rom. 6:16* *1 Cor. 6:19*; *Mt. 10:36-38*; *17:20-21*; *Jn. 14:12*)
2. Characteristics of a Holy Spirit filled believer:
  - a. Christ-like character: (See *Gal. 5:22-23*)
  - b. Boldly sharing the Gospel and reaping: (See *Acts 2:4,41*; *4:31*; *5:14*; *6:3*, *7*; *11:24*)
  - c. Constantly singing vibrantly to the Lord: (See *Eph. 5:18-19*)
  - d. Continually (always) being thankful for everything (absence of worry, disappointment, guilt, doubt, irritability, resentment, inferiority, jealousy, fears, etc.) (See *Eph. 5:18*, *20*)
  - e. Being submissive to the authority figures in your life: (See *Eph. 5:18-6:9*)
3. Continual fillings due to the quenching of the Holy Spirit:

Quenching the Holy Spirit - the word used for quenching means "to smother or extinguish the flame." Don't extinguish the influence of the Holy Spirit in your heart by willfully disobeying any absolute of Scripture. Although the Holy Spirit still indwells the believer, disobedience brings His "filling" work of assuring, understanding and applying Scripture, conviction, bold witness, eternal focus, power to break habits, resisting temptation, controlling the tongue, implementing marital, parental, occupational roles, the delivery of prayers, spiritual growth, and divine guidance to a complete standstill. Disobedience empties your life of the Spirit's influence while prompt confession begins the filling process all over again - therefore the need for numerous fillings. Prompt confession that re-ignites the flame triggering the Spirit's refilling, includes acknowledging sin (going my own way) that has no justifiable cause, seeing it for how it has hurt God, asking for God's help to hate the sin the way He does, begging for his forgiveness with no thought of deserving it, and promptly establishing new patterns so it won't happen again. Quenching the Holy Spirit with unconfessed sin cripples the intended powerful testimony of the individual believer as well as the local church he attends. The powerless individual and his powerless local church must now resort to a carnal (fleshly) emphasis using entertainment to excite feelings and self serving church growth strategies that can be accomplished in the flesh. Quenched lives being empowered by the flesh, have replaced the vibrant supernatural work of the Holy Spirit which so graphically empowered the handicapped lives and churches (they were without the completed Word of God) throughout the book of Acts. (See *1 Thes. 5:19*; *1 Cor. 3:1-3*; *1 Pet. 3:7*; *Ps. 66:18*; *1 Jn. 1:9*; etc.)

### II. THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT INTRODUCED: (See *1 Cor. 12*)

- #### A. Defining spiritual gifts: "Spiritual gifts are special abilities that allow me to function in the local church with ease and success. The Holy Spirit gives these gifts at the moment of salvation, with each born-again believer having at least one. Since they are unconditional gifts, they cannot be lost but they can be ignored or misused by operating in the flesh."

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B. There are five reasons for the Holy Spirit giving believers spiritual gifts:

1. To exalt exclusively the person and work of Jesus Christ at the expense of self: (See *1 Cor. 12:3; Eph. 4:13-15; Jn. 15:26; 16:14*)
2. For the local church to have all the necessary parts to function as an autonomous entity in any culture throughout the world: (See *1 Cor. 12:14-20*)
3. To humble every member to take the initiative and be a participant rather than a spectator in serving each other in a local church, the way a physical body functions: (See *1 Cor. 12:20-24*)
4. To force each member to sincerely need others and join with others in ministry embracing the fact that more can be done together in the local church than can be done individually: (See *1 Cor. 12:19-24*)
5. To unify the local church for the sake of the proclamation of the Gospel in the community and throughout the world: (See *1 Cor. 12:25; Jn. 17:11b, 21-22*)

C. Three different groups of spiritual gifts:

1. Service gifts: "Service gifts are the maintenance gifts that minister to others behind the scenes and are rarely publicly acknowledged. They repair what is broken and lubricate the moving parts of a local church so everything functions harmoniously. The majority of believers have at least one of these gifts, yet they are rarely discovered because they are not as glamorous as the support or sign gifts, and therefore carnally overlooked. Only someone who is filled with the Holy Spirit will value them in others and in themselves."
2. Support gifts: "Support gifts involve the ministry of the Scriptures. These gifts are given more authority and honor than most of the other gifts, so they have greater appeal to those carnally minded. They are public scriptural gifts that do the shaping and building of the local church. Once again, the balance of Scripture is on display. The Holy Spirit knew that for a local church to reach any level of maturity in drawing others to Christ, it would need a maintenance ministry done to existing parts (service gifts), while conducting an aggressive building ministry (support gifts), to expand and further equip the local church in effectively "reaching their world for Christ". Every local church must have both a maintenance ministry and a building ministry going on, or it will soon become a lifeless church of spectators."
3. Sign gifts: "Sign gifts were super-human abilities that altered the laws of nature. They were the most sought after gifts by those living in carnality, because of how it placed them in the spotlight with both believers and unbelievers. These gifts were given by the Holy Spirit so local church leaders could authenticate God's spokesman with the absence of the completed Word of God. Local church leaders could check out both the teacher and his message with these gifts being exercised. They, for the most part, were no longer needed after healthy local churches were multiplying, and God's Word complete in written form."

D. Admonishments regarding spiritual gifts:

1. Don't be "ignorant" concerning spiritual gifts. (See *1 Cor. 12:1*)
2. "Stir up" (keep on stirring) your spiritual gifts as bellows do a fire. (See *1 Tim. 1:6*) The idea is to follow through on your commitments so that your gifts will be practiced regularly, successfully, and joyfully. God will then be using you to glue this local church together, rather than fragmenting it. The key word here is "faithfulness". (See *Ps. 101:6; Mt. 25:21, 23; 1 Cor. 4:2*)
3. "Don't neglect" your spiritual gift. (See *1 Tim. 4:14*) When you find out what your gifts are, be diligent to faithfully practice them week in and week out, so you will be the unifying enabler of your local church's ministry. You can't loose, outgrow or retire from implementing them, since they are purposely given by the Holy Spirit to equip you for a lifetime of service in a local body of believers.

### III. FIVE SUPPORT (BUILDING) GIFTS THAT GROW A CHURCH UP:

#### A. The spiritual gift of **apostleship**: (See *I Cor. 12:28*)

1. The gift explained: "This gift required pre-requisites of being a witness to the resurrection or of the resurrected Lord. The gift was first in rank and order. This gift allows a man to possess most of the other sign gifts as well as carrying out all of the service and support gifts. The heart of an apostle's job description was to plant churches and uphold them until the Scriptures were completed. (See *I Cor. 9:1; Eph. 2:20*)
2. Example – Paul and the twelve disciples are examples: (See *Acts 1:24-26; Rom. 1:1*)
3. Practicing the gift today – This gift ceased due to its limited definition. The need for this gift was eliminated when God's Word was completed. (See *I Cor. 9:1; 13:8; Eph. 2:20*)

#### B. The spiritual gift of **prophecy**: (See *I Cor. 12:10, 28*)

1. The gift explained: The word means to "speak forth" or "one who sees" (seer). This gift was essential before the completion of the Word of God. The individual with the gift of prophecy was to speak without error, a word from the Lord consistent with the Word that had already been written. It would either foretell the future (Elijah) or forth tell a word directly for the present (Moses – greatest of the prophets – *Deut. 34:10*). Professing prophets who were in error were to be stoned (See *Deut. 13:1-11*). Both forms of prophecy can be found in the New Testament, and the example used in I Corinthians is to forth tell in order to inform, build up, reprove, and comfort.
2. Example – Paul (forth telling) and Agabas (foretelling): (See *Acts 20:24; 21:10*)
3. Practicing the gift today – it ceased by definition with the completion of the Scriptures. (See *I Cor. 13:8; Eph. 2:20*)

#### C. The spiritual gift of **evangelism**: (See *Eph. 4:11*)

1. The gift explained: The word means "gospelizer". This gift allows an individual to share the gospel with the lost world with more ease and success, experiencing a harvest with lost people coming to Christ. Although everyone is to do the work of an evangelist (See *II Tim. 4:5*), those with this gift, reap a much greater harvest.
2. Example – Stephen and Philip: (See *Acts 7-8*)

#### D. The spiritual gift of **pastor-teacher**: (See *Eph. 4:11*)

1. The gift explained: This gift allows an individual to shepherd a local church by leading, feeding, and caring for the congregation. It must be a man (cannot be a woman) displaying Christ-like character, servanthood, and faithfulness. (See *I Pet. 5:2-4; I Tim. 3:1-2; Tit. 1:5-9*)
2. Examples – James: (See *Acts 15:13-21*) Timothy (See *II Tim. 4:1-2*) Tychicus (See *Eph. 6:21*)
3. Practicing this gift today: Essential for the church today.
4. Differences between a pastor-teacher and evangelist:

|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Focus:     | Pastor-teacher – the saved<br>Evangelist – the unsaved                                                                                                                                                             |
| Goals:     | Pastor-teacher – spiritual growth (follow-up, discipleship, training leaders)<br>Evangelist - conversion                                                                                                           |
| Timetable: | Pastor-teacher – could take a lifetime at one local church<br>Evangelist – as soon as conversion takes place, he moves on to others<br>(Philip and eunuch - <i>Acts 8:26-40</i> ; Billy and Franklin Graham today) |

E. The spiritual gift of **teacher**: (See *1 Cor. 12:28*)

1. The gift explained: This gift is the only gift mentioned in each of the lists of spiritual gifts. It allows the individual to effectively teach the Word of God while also providing the relevant applications (how the information taught must immediately change the student's life). A pastor is a teacher, but a teacher is not necessarily a preacher. Women as well as men can have this gift, but women are limited to teaching other women and children, never men. (See *1 Tim. 2:11-12; 1 Cor. 14:34; Tit. 2:4*) (See footnote on Acts 16:11-15)
2. Example – Mark: (See *Col. 4:10*)
3. Practicing this gift today: Absolutely vital to the local church today.

IV. **PRINCIPLES TO PERSONALLY APPLY:**

(Together becoming “people of the Word” in principle AND in practice)

- A. Carnal pride drives those with “support gifts” away from the “little people” in the local church. (See *Mt. 19:13-14; Mk. 10:13-16; Lk. 18:15-17; Jn. 21:15, 21-22*)
- B. For those with “support gifts” who also are filled with the Holy Spirit, their building up ministry will always translate into a building out ministry. (See *Acts 2:47b; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7; 8:4, 37; 10:45; 11:21, 24; 12:24; 13:12, 43, 48; 14:1; 17:4, 12, 34; 18:8; 19:10, 17-18; 28:24*)