

The Wreckage and the Fire Pt 20

The Manifestation

The Gifts and Manifestations of the Holy Spirit

Series: The Wreckage and The Fire | 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 28-31 | Part 2

1 Corinthians 12:7 (NKJV) - *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.*

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Introduction:

Fire Department - Imagine watching a fire department standing outside a burning apartment building. Smoke is pouring from the windows. **(Put up Pic of Fire Department fighting a fire...)** Children are trapped inside.

Half of the firefighters are arguing that hoses don't work anymore. **They insist hoses were only for firefighters in the early days.**

The other half are spraying water into the air just to prove the hoses still work.

Meanwhile...the building is still burning. The issue was never the hose. **The issue was the fire.**

The mission wasn't to debate the equipment. The mission was to rescue the people.

Then transition: For nearly two thousand years, the Church has stood around arguing about the hoses while a lost world burns. Some say the gifts don't exist anymore. Others have become so fascinated with the gifts that the equipment became the attraction. Paul says both sides have missed the point.

The church has been having the wrong argument about spiritual gifts for most of its history. **Cessationism vs.**

Excess

- Error 1 - cessationism: gifts ceased with the apostles; what we see today is emotionalism or deception
- Error 2 - excess: gifts must dominate every service
- Paul's position is neither

The gifts are given by a sovereign Spirit who distributes as He determines, for the common good. The gifts are to be earnestly desired by a community

that knows it cannot reach a broken world on natural capacity alone.

The gifts are not the goal, they are the equipment. When the Church argues about whether to use its equipment it has confused the debate with the mission.

1. What the Gifts Are

1 Corinthians 12:7-10 (NKJV) - *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom...to another the word of knowledge...to another faith...to another gifts of healings...to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.*

- ***phanerosis*** – manifestation = a making visible of what was invisible; an event in which the Spirit shows Himself through a human vessel

The gifts are not abilities you possess. They are events in which the Spirit makes Himself visible. You are not the gift. You are the site where the gift occurs.

THE NINE GIFTS FALL INTO THREE CATEGORIES:

GIFTS OF REVELATION

- **WORD OF WISDOM** - Spirit-given insight into what to DO in an impossible situation
- **WORD OF KNOWLEDGE** - Spirit-given revelation of a FACT not knowable by natural means
 - "Word of" -- not wisdom or knowledge in general; a single utterance, a specific piece, for this moment
 - Nathan to David: "You are the man." - word of knowledge
 - Solomon and the two mothers - word of wisdom

God doesn't give you the whole picture. He gives you what the moment requires.

- **DISCERNING OF SPIRITS** - the ability to distinguish what is from above and what is from below

Corinth was saturated with spirits - not every supernatural experience was the Holy Spirit.

Discernment is the immune system of the Spirit-filled community - not suspicion, protection

GIFTS OF POWER

- **GIFT OF FAITH** - not saving faith; a sovereign, sudden impartation of certainty for an impossible moment
 - The faith that precedes the miracle, not the faith that follows it
 - George Muller fed 10,000 orphans without publicly asking anyone for a single cent - **he described sudden, unshakeable deposits of certainty before the provision arrived**
- **GIFTS OF HEALINGS** - BOTH words plural
 - Not "the gift of healing" as a permanent personal ability
 - Every healing is a fresh grace-event for a fresh moment - no one owns it
 - The plurality prevents any person from claiming healing as their spiritual trademark
- **WORKINGS OF Miracles** - both plural; the intrusion of a higher law into the domain of a lower one

GIFTS OF UTTERANCE

- **PROPHECY** - Spirit-inspired declaration that builds, exhorts, and comforts (1 Cor 14:3); tested by Scripture, never replacing it

- **KINDS OF TONGUES** - gene means species, types; multiple forms, not one uniform expression
 - **Personal prayer language (Romans 8:26)**
 - **Corporate tongue requiring interpretation (1 Cor 14)**
 - **Known human languages unknown to the speaker (Acts 2)**
- **INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES** - Spirit-given rendering into the language of the congregation; together with tongues it functions as prophecy

NINE GIFTS. THREE CATEGORIES. ONE SOURCE. ONE PURPOSE: THE PROFIT OF ALL!

NOT THE PERFORMER'S REPUTATION, THE CONGREGATION'S ENTERTAINMENT, BUT THE PERSON WHO COULD NOT BE REACHED ANY OTHER WAY.

These grace-events are moments in which the Spirit of God acts through a yielded human vessel for the benefit of the community. The giver is always the Spirit. The gift belongs to the moment.

2. How the Gifts Work

1 Corinthians 12:11, 28-30 (NKJV) - *But one and the same Spirit works all these things, **distributing to each one individually as He wills...**Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?*

bouletai - as He wills, as He determines - sovereign, intentional; the governing principle of every gift.

- The Spirit does not operate on the believer's schedule or the congregation's expectation
- He distributes as He determines - always for the common good

This prevents two disasters simultaneously: the pride of the person who thinks they control the gift, and the despair of the person who thinks they can never receive it.

- Paul's rhetorical questions in vv.29-30 answer themselves:
 - *Are all apostles? No. Are all prophets? No. Do all speak with tongues? No.*

- *Not every believer operates in every gift - But every believer is gifted - the question is not whether, but who will yield...*

THEY GIFTS ARE A FLOWING RIVER (JOHN 7) AND OUR JOB IS NOT TO CONTROL THE FLOW; OUR JOB IS TO STAY IN THE CHANNEL.

YOUR PART IS AVAILABILITY, NOT PERFORMANCE!

Preach: *The church has substituted eloquence for the anointing, psychology for the Spirit, and programs for the power of God. And the world is not impressed - because what we are offering is something they can produce themselves without the inconvenience of conversion.*

3. Why the Gifts Matter

1 Corinthians 12:31 (NKJV) - *But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.*

- **zeloun** - to earnestly desire, to burn with zeal - not passive waiting but active, intentional pursuit
- "Earnestly desire" is a command, not a suggestion

Important principle to preach: **SOVEREIGNTY AND DESIRE OPERATE SIMULTANEOUSLY** - they do not cancel each other

The Spirit distributes as He determines. The believer pursues with burning desire. Both are true at the same time

meizona - greater gifts - not morally superior; greater in impact for the edification of the body

"Greater" is determined by how many people are built up, not how dramatic the manifestation is

- Prophecy outranks tongues in chapter 14 - not because it is holier, but because it edifies more people at once

The gifts matter because people are broken in ways that natural capacity cannot reach. Every pastor has run out of human wisdom. Every believer has stood at a bedside medicine gave up on. The gifts exist because God's strategy for reaching a broken world runs through ordinary people made extraordinary by a Spirit who shows up.

"A more excellent way" - this is not a replacement for the gifts. It is the road every gift must travel. Remove the

road and the gift goes nowhere. Or worse, it arrives and does damage.

DESIRE THE GIFTS. PURSUE THEM EARNESTLY. AND LET EVERY GIFT TRAVEL ON THE ROAD PAUL IS ABOUT TO DESCRIBE.

THE GIFTS WITHOUT LOVE ARE NOISE.

THE GIFTS WITH LOVE ARE THE VOICE OF GOD REACHING SOMEONE WHO COULD NOT HAVE BEEN REACHED ANY OTHER WAY.

The gifts of the Spirit are the normal equipment of a community called to do the work of the kingdom in a world that cannot be transformed by natural means alone. The church that operates without them is not more mature. It is less equipped.

Conclusion - Every time a word of knowledge lands on a wound someone carried in silence - the Spirit showed up. Every time healing restores what medicine said was permanent - the Spirit showed up. Every time prophecy speaks the name of a hope someone buried - the Spirit showed up. Every time a tongue breaks through where words in any language fall short - the Spirit showed up.

Be available. Be yielded. Be the site. The Spirit will handle the showing up.

THE SPIRIT IS NOT HISTORICAL. HE IS PRESENT. HE SHOWS UP WHERE HE IS WELCOMED, WHERE HE IS NEEDED, AND WHERE SOMEONE IS WILLING TO BE THE PLACE HE CHOOSES TO APPEAR - BE THAT PLACE!