



SESSION 6b

EMPOWERED THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Chip Kawalsingh

My friends, you asked me about spiritual gifts. I want you to remember that before you became followers of the Lord, you were led in all the wrong ways by idols that cannot even talk. Now I want you to know that if you are led by God's Spirit, you will say that Jesus is Lord, and you will never curse Jesus.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but they all come from the same Spirit. There are different ways to serve the same Lord, and we can each do different things. Yet the same God works in all of us and helps us in everything we do.

*The Spirit has given each of us a special way of serving others. Some of us can speak with wisdom, while others can speak with knowledge, but these gifts come from the same Spirit. To others the Spirit has given great faith or the power to heal the sick or the power to work mighty miracles. Some of us are prophets, and some of us recognize when God's Spirit is present. Others can speak different kinds of languages, and still others can tell what these languages mean. But it is the Spirit who does all this and decides which gifts to give to each of us.
(1 Corinthians 12:1-11, CEV)*

Gifts cannot be bought or earned. It is the Holy Spirit who decides who gets what gifts and it is through the local church that these gifts are developed and used. These gifts are supernatural in character and not just a refinement of physical powers or intuitions.

In Christian circles, gifts and gifted men are often glorified above a lifestyle of character and integrity. Even though we recognise and honour those whom God has put over us, we do not glorify men as all glory belongs to God. We see the fruits of the Spirit as the 'stamp of approval' for the gifts; the fruit confirms the tree.

God sometimes uses us in an area for a specific task and it is easy to mistake God's anointing for divine approval (Psalms 139:23-24).

Just because God uses you does not mean He approves of your lifestyle.

We believe the gifts of the Spirit are for use today. The believer can function in these gifts in a godly, church-building manner, and these gifts have a rightful place in God's house. However, because of a lack of understanding about the gifts and the fruits that must accompany them, we have set in place some boundaries for these gifts to flow in.

1. The gifts defined

Gift: Something that is given to somebody; unearned; given by God Himself.

The Holy Spirit is the source of all gifts. Gifts are not natural abilities but the result of the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit causing the believer to supernaturally move into a spirit-ordained realm, created by God to meet specific needs at predestined times (1 Corinthians 12).



2. The gifts revealed

Gifts can be grouped into 3 main types (adapted from *Principles of Church Life* by Bill Scheidler):

Gifts of Revelation

— God revealing His mind to His church

- Wisdom: The God-given ability to gain supernatural wisdom from God when it is needed (Matthew 22:15-22)
- Knowledge: The God-given ability to receive supernatural information from God which is humanly impossible to know (John 4:17-19)
- Discernment: The God-given ability to see beyond the person into the spirit behind that person (Acts 16:16-18)

Gifts of Inspiration

— the voice of God to the church

- Tongues: The God-given ability to speak in a language unknown to the believer (Acts 2:1-17)
- Interpretation: The God-given ability to bring forth, in a known tongue, a message which is given in an unknown tongue (Daniel 5:25-28)
- Prophecy: The God-given ability to speak a message from God which is imparted by the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:28; 21:10-11; 1 Corinthians 14:32)

Gifts of Demonstration

— the visible working of God in the church

- Faith: The God-given ability to see the impossible as possible (Acts 3:11, 13-16)
- Healing: The God-given ability to see physical healing of the body by the laying on of hands (Acts 28: 8-10)
- Miracles: The God-given ability to perform the impossible (Acts 20:9-12)

We operate in these gifts by totally submitting ourselves to God. The believer should develop a God-given passion to be used by Him in these gifts, for the purpose of comforting and exhorting. It is in no way a self-building mandate, but a commission to raise your faith level in order to build the church and reach the lost (Romans 6:1-2, 13; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6).

3. Operating in the gifts

We encourage the move of God through the gifts of the Spirit. However, not everyone who operates in a gift should be heard, as we believe that the fruit of their life is more important than their gift. Here are our set guidelines for those who desire to operate in these gifts (1 Corinthians 14:27-40):

We encourage you:

- Not to give personal prophecy or direction
- Not to give council to marriages
- Not to prophesy or speak out without first checking the word with a pastor

Ask yourself:

- Is this message flowing with what God is saying?
- Is this the right time to function in this gift?
- Does my manner or presentation add or detract from God and the message?
- Is this message for me or the church?