

Encounter(ing) God

Holy Spirit Part 7

Rob Rogers

August 25, 2019

Review

Encountering Father, Son, Spirit. No mere head knowledge, personal experience! Encountering the Holy Spirit — He — not it — Person, power, priority, purpose.

Today's Message — Introduction to the Gifts of the Spirit; not specifically about each gift. That is later.

- **1 Corinthians 12:1-12**

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. ²You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. ³Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit. ⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for **the common good**. ⁸For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of **wisdom**, and to another the utterance of **knowledge** according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another **faith** by the same Spirit, to another gifts of **healing** by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of **miracles**, to another **prophecy**, to another the ability to **distinguish between spirits**, to another various kinds of **tongues**, to another the **interpretation of tongues**. ¹¹All these are **empowered by one and the same Spirit**, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. ¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

This passage is not only the mission of the church — but it also tells us an enormous amount about how God wants to accomplish His mission.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFTS
THE POWER OF THE GIFTS
THE PRIORITY OF THE GIFTS

Definition of Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual gifts are supernatural abilities given by God to every believer

- The word “gifts” comes from the root word Charis, Charismata, meaning favor, grace, blessings
- There are two ditches that the church can fall into, especially as it relates to the gifts...
 - one is charismania... where we only seek sensational and emotional spiritual experiences that aren't rooted in Scripture, and that don't glorify Jesus
 - the job of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus
 - The other ditch is that we're so doctrinally rigid and stoic, and so afraid of the supernatural, that we avoid the filling and moving of the Holy Spirit at all
 - resulting in a cold, lifeless, Christianity; “the frozen chosen”

- we want to walk the healthy, vibrant, biblically sound, scripturally-rooted, powerful path — that healthy balance between those two dangerous, and destructive ditches.
- we want everything the Spirit wants to give us, and we want to remain 100% in alignment with the Word, the Will, and the Ways of God.
 - Because the Holy Spirit will never operate in ways that are contradictory to the Scripture.
- **If you surrendered your life to Jesus Christ — you have spiritual gifts.**
- In our passage, there is a small list of some of the gifts... there are other places in scripture where gifts are listed, **Ephesians 4, Romans 12.**

Purpose of the Gifts

Whenever the Bible talks about the gifts of the Spirit, it always, always, always, refers to them within the context of the body of Christ.

- **1 Corinthians 12:12**
For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.
- **Ephesians 4:15**
We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.
- **Romans 12:4**
For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
- if we as the church are a body, then our commitment to one another **MUST** go deeper than and beyond personal preferences
- it must go deeper than what we get out of attending and consuming a weekend service
- It means that the **Spirit of Self** *MUST be replaced with the Spirit of Christ!*
- **It means we cannot view the Church as a human institution that is designed for our consumption**
 - what I get out of it, and how it benefits me; the music is too loud, or I didn't like the message

Question — As followers of Jesus empowered and gifted by the Holy Spirit...

Is that how high we're setting our sights?

Is that really how big our faith gets?

Is that how deep our commitment goes?

**When the Spirit descended on believers in the book of Acts...
it doesn't say, "God poured out gifts on a select few
and invited everyone else to come watch."**

The believers at Pentecost said, “We repent of our life of rebellion against God, we’re all in with Jesus!” They get filled, gifts are poured out on them, and on DAY ONE, 3,000 “attendees” become engaged, and activated.

It’s not about a bunch of people coming to watch a few people operate in their gifts. It’s about the detonation of God’s miraculous, empowering grace on every single believer! When the Holy Spirit came down, He breathed on people from every tribe, nation, and tongue — and ignited this uncontrollable, unstoppable, decentralized, bottom-up, dynamic, empowering, empire-toppling, paradigm-shifting, culture-flipping movement of God.

**God wants every single believer to know
you have an eternally significant role to play.
God has gifted you powerfully, intentionally, and uniquely.**

WHY? To what end?

- **1 Corinthians 12:4-7**

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for **the common good**.

- you have been gifted to do something — not to just to attend, not just consume, but to contribute in eternally significant ways
- for the building up of the body, the health and maturity of the church
- the expansion of God’s Kingdom in Williamson County, the State of Tennessee, the United States of America, and to the ends of the earth for the common good of all people

That’s a big mission. *In our own strength, we’ve got nothing of eternal significance to contribute to that. We can’t manufacture that.*

The Power of the Gifts

When someone is operating in their spiritual gifting, it’s incredible to witness. When you’re operating in your spiritual gift, it’s not like you fall into some trance and have no control of yourself... it’s you, it’s absolutely you, but it’s God is taking what He has gifted you to do, and breathing on it, and it becomes something miraculous.

“Ability to speak or act in a particular way—*performing* ability, as we may call it—is only a *charisma* [a spiritual gift] if and as God uses it to edify... What constitutes and identifies a *charisma* is not the form of the action but the blessing of God.”¹

~ J.I. Packer

Packer is differentiating between a natural talent and a spiritual gift. He’s saying if something you’re doing is being used by God to bring about spiritual enrichment, renewal, edification, or transformation in a person or a group of people... that is a spiritual gift.

**It’s God breathing on what He’s put in you to do.
A natural talent cannot bring about spiritual renewal.
Only the Spirit can do that.**

¹ J. I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit: Finding Fullness in Our Walk with God* (Baker Books, 2005) 71

- **1 Corinthians 12:1-3**

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. ²You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. ³Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.

- when you’re operating in your spiritual gifts, as you serve others with the gifts that God has given you... people are brought more deeply under the Lordship of Christ.
- **No one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except in the Holy Spirit.**

**The power of the gift is that it points people to Jesus.
It helps people see Jesus clearly, and submit to Him completely.**

- There is no natural talent, or ability that we have that can bring about spiritual transformation in someone else’s life.
- Only the Spirit of God, the breath of God, the blessing of God, the gifts of the Holy Spirit can do that.

BUT THERE IS A DANGER and a distinction we need to be aware of..

There is an crucial difference between the gifts of the Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit.

- The **Fruit of the Spirit: Galatians 5:22** – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control – *are references to you **character**. This is what the Spirit is working to transform in your life.*
- **Spiritual gifts** are about *what God wants to do through your life.*

Spiritual Fruit is about what you are; Spiritual Gifts are what you do.

Spiritual Fruit is about your character; Spiritual Gifts are about behavior.

AND HERE’S OUR DANGER... that we operate in the power of our spiritual gifts, without growing in our spiritual fruit.

- Your gifts can fool you into thinking that you’re close to Christ.
- You can be used by God but remain distant from him.
- You can be operating in your gifts, but not growing in your character.
- For those of you that have spiritual influence... be careful. Be careful.
- Don’t mistake one for the other

“I believe ability can get you to the top, but it takes character to keep you there.”²
~ Coach John Wooden

- **Proverbs 18:16**

A man’s gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men.
○ a gift can make room, but character has to sustain

- **the impact of your gift will only last as long as the fruit behind it.**

² Carol S. Dweck, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (Random House, 2006) 97

- The Holy Spirit not only gifts us to do supernatural things
- He is working in us to form us more and more into the image, the character, the nature of Christ.

**The beauty of the New Covenant
is that the indwelling Holy Spirit is doing more in us,
so that He can accomplish more through us.**

The Priority of the Gifts

God has gifted every one of us, intentionally, uniquely and powerfully through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit apportions to each individually. We're all one body, and no two people have the exact same function within the body. If you don't function within the body in the way that only you were designed and gifted to function — the rest of the body suffers.

- **Romans 12:4-5**

For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them...

**The mission of Grace Chapel is
“To equip people to be passionate servants of Jesus Christ.”**

- We want every member, every believer equipped for the work of the ministry.
 - We want every person ignited, activated, passionately using their God-breathed gifts...
 - ...out of service to Christ, His body, and for the expansion of His Kingdom on the earth
-

What is your response?

“I already know what my gifts are, and I'm already using them.”

- How might God want to further stretch and strengthen those gifts in this next season of life?
- Where might He be inviting you to step out in faith and obedience to Him?

“I know my gifts, but I'm not using them, or I don't have an opportunity to use them right now.”

- There could be several reasons for this...
 - It could be a fear of risk or failure
 - The only way you going to grow in your gifting and your confidence is if you give God a chance to come through for you.
 - Put yourself out there. You'll stumble, but you'll grow, and we'll all be better for it.
 - It also could be that God hasn't given you opportunity because of *misplaced motivations*. *This is really important.*
- **1 Corinthians 13:1-2**

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

 - In other words, I can make a spectacle of God in way that draws people to myself

If my motivation for using my spiritual gifts is out of genuine love and service to God and other people... God is going to make room for that to happen.

Maybe you're not in either one of those categories and you're saying, "I have no idea what my spiritual gifts are and I don't know how to discover them."

- There is no one perfect way... but one of the ways we do it here is through our STEPS classes.
- For an opportunity to guide you through that discovery process, can sign up for those on our website, www.GraceChapel.net/Steps

Close

This is so important, church. Why? Because when you're using your gifts, when you do what only you can do — when you operate in the ways that God has designed you to and gifted you to — the whole body wins!

But if you don't discover what your gifts are, and don't operate in them — the whole body suffers.

We do not want, as the newspapers say, a church that will move *with* the world. We want a church that will *move* the world.³

~ G.K. Chesterton

**The only way that's ever going to happen is
if every single one of us is filled with breath of heaven,
discovers their God-given gifts — and begins to operate in them.**

The church is not an audience to be entertained; it is an army to be empowered. The crowds will not change communities; but the mobilized force of Spirit-empowered, Holy Spirit-gifted, and engaged followers of Jesus will.

Subjective Inventory for Exploring Your Gifts

1. In my work or ministry I find myself most fulfilled when...
2. Others have told me I am most helpful when...
3. I am often asked to... (e.g. counsel, teach, lead, plan, administrate, etc.)
4. The people I feel the greatest burden for in the world are....
5. I believe God has given me the responsibility of _____ in my congregation.
6. My biggest concern for the church is...
7. If I could be assured of not failing in ministry I would...

³ Joseph Pearce, *Wisdom and Innocence: A Life of G.K. Chesterton* (Ignatius Press, 2015) 279

NOTES